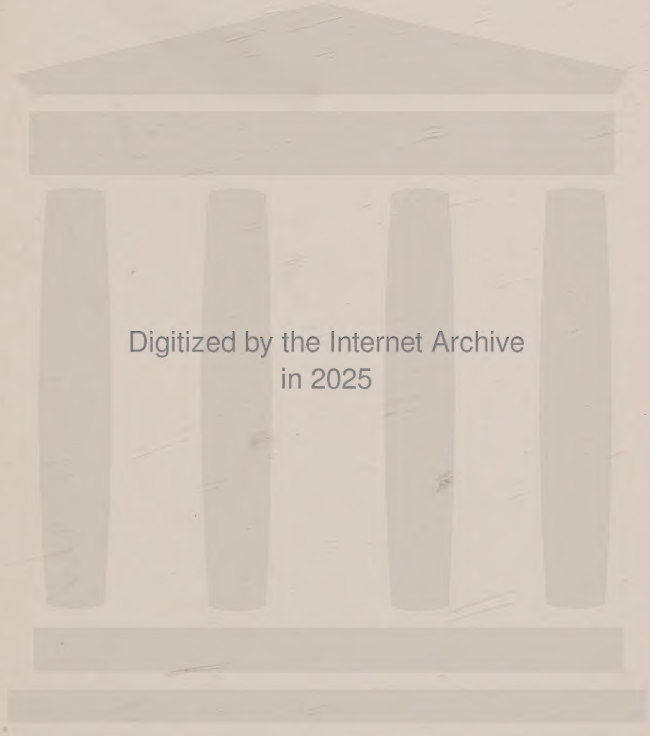
Drama *in* Religious Service

Martha Candler

MAY 26 1960

DRAMA
IN
RELIGIOUS SERVICE



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THE VIRGIN MARY

From the Pomfret, Connecticut, "Nativity"

DRAMA
IN
RELIGIOUS SERVICE

BY
MARTHA CANDLER CHENEY

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INTRODUCTION

Religion and the drama. . . . For hundreds of years they were poles apart. Even though the medieval play grew out of the church, later times brought so wide a gulf that even now, when this distance is rapidly diminishing, the drawing together seems strange. Not so long ago, the very linking of the words "Christianity" and "the stage" would have offended Christian ears. But the war changed our world. At the beginning of a new epoch, old forces are combining in new syntheses.

The church has come to its post-war responsibilities with a sympathy, an understanding that has been deepened, strengthened. All over the country one hears a new salvation preached: salvation here and now from the warping littleness and meanness of an everyday material existence in which all the ideals have become those of getting and having rather than of being and becoming. And what churches, great and small, preach

on Sunday they are working toward during the week in parish hall and church basement. Here, every talent, every power of head, heart or hand is called on to help demonstrate the truth that we grow by conscious effort. And now to arts and crafts groups, to musical activities, to study circles of all kinds is added a new field of work, limitless in its possibilities—the field of the drama. The warmth of color, the eloquence of the spoken word, the power of suspense and climax, the emotional appeal in plays of beauty and truth are now being used with dignity by hundreds of churches the country over. Here is an added means of applied Christianity toward the creation of the Life More Abundant.

Drama, as we have been in the habit of thinking of it, would need much purification before being brought into the chancel or pulpit to make the services of the church more sacred and appealing, or into the auditorium to illustrate the practical working out of the hightest type of Christian idealism. But the regenerative spiritual forces which have been making themselves felt elsewhere have been present in the theater as well.

It has been some years since Mr. Archibald Henderson wrote:

"The dramatists of the newer dispensation are leaders, not mere spokesmen. . . . The theater today, as is well realized, no longer makes its appeal merely to ordinary instincts. It serves as a stimulant, an excitant to higher emotions. . . These emotions are social, humane, Christian in their nature:—the sense of brotherhood, the idea of justice, equality, the sentiment of social solidarity, the passion for social service, the desire for race improvement, and sympathy for the wronged and afflicted.

"It is becoming well recognized," Professor Henderson adds, "that the drama has actually begun to challenge the church as an instrumentality for inculcating, in the popular mind, just and adequate codes of individual and social conduct. When the modern drama reenforces the visual appeal and the 'trenchant argument of the flesh' with the tremendously potent argument of dramatized morals and philosophy couched in the most telling phraseology and fortified with all the arts of the orator, the dialectician and the preacher,

it is easy to see the immense role the theater of the future is destined to play in the civil life of the future. . . . To identify itself with, to utilize for its own transcendent purposes, the potentialities of such an art as that of the drama, is one of the obvious ways in which the church may hope and confidently expect to regain its hold over the minds and conscience of the people."

The extent to which this challenge has already been accepted will surprise many. One writer (Clarence Stratton in *Producing in Little Theaters)* makes an estimate that there are ten thousand active dramatic groups already organized in the churches of the country, or in connection with them. This may be a somewhat extravagant reckoning, but years of actual trial have furnished abundant evidence that the church dramatic organization has exerted a powerful influence as an educational force, a social force, a high type of recreation and a means of artistic self-expression. Drama has again and again proved itself the unifying element which has lent purpose and direction to many sorts of church activities which are otherwise somewhat objectless, somewhat unco-ordinated—activities such as elocution-

ary and musical clubs, sewing and manual training classes, design and art-craft work.

The spontaneous dramatization of the Sunday School or Bible lesson is not new, nor the Missionary play, nor the dramatic entertainment of the church social group. But now the church with the new vision inevitably takes one step further, "utilizing the drama for its own transcendent purposes" in acted sermon, in ritual, liturgy and church holiday services. Magically, it is in drama so utilized that the pent-up social and spiritual impulses of the participants, suddenly released, take on a form, a beauty and a vividness of appeal which even the sponsors of modern Biblical drama scarcely foresaw. It is here that the significance of Christian teaching blossoms anew, infinitely fresh, infinitely miraculous. The import of the new service, as one begins to see it is: Come let us worship Him in the Holiness of Beauty. It is a worship so vibrant with life and truth and sincerity that the heart of even the unbeliever is touched.

There are still those who, remembering the past repute of the drama, look askance; who fail to see the significance of its union with religion—of

the flowing together of these two mighty forces which, united, are becoming in some measure an expression of the increased spiritual impulses of the times. This union has been made possible by the changed spirit of the drama. Walter Hampden expressed a realization of this change when he wrote:

"Simplicity, truth, beauty, reality, significance, are vague terms as definitions, but certain in their appeal to the higher consciousness, and it is the higher consciousness that must dominate. The spirit is to set us free. Yet how impossible to define it. We have to hold it, aspire to it, be sincerely guided by it, else we shall achieve nothing that endures. These vague attributes or eternal things are the substance of all past achievement. . . . These abstract conceptions are creative powers. Without them, we can do nothing; with them, we can reflect supernal glories in concrete form.

"The great artist wins his way through self control in order to achieve mastery of his materials. He will not only be artist but man, a lover of God and his fellows, and that means a personal victory in ethics, an experience in religion,

practical culture and understanding. A great artist in living said: 'Seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven and all these things shall be added unto you.' By the application of this truth to our work so may we, the artists of the theater, contribute our mite to the treasure house of beauty which is the eternal heritage of the human race."

DRAMA
IN RELIGIOUS SERVICE

" . . . So must the drama of God-in-Man, the tragedy of a human Saviour purify mankind not by terror of retribution from without but by fear of God within the heart; not alone by pity for sorrows inexplicable and intimate but by sympathy with the suffering brotherhood of man.

"What Christianity teaches the tragedy of a Christian civilization must present in the symbolic form of actual lives, characters and conflicts, inward righteousness, outward charity."

CHARLES MILLS GAYLEY:
Plays of Our Forefathers

DRAMA IN RELIGIOUS SERVICE

CHAPTER I

A NEW FORM OF WORSHIP EVOLVING

I will remember only that drama is spirit speaking to spirit.

Sheldon Cheney, in *Modern Art and the Theater.*

SEATED in the darkened nave of a church, one is made supremely aware of the truth of these words. A rapt silence holds the spectator spellbound, his attention fixed upon pulpit, rostrum or chancel—temporarily transformed into a stage—upon which is unfolded, scene by scene, some familiar Bible story; or spectacle by spectacle, the *mysteries* or *miracles* which, as of old, symbolize the sacraments of the Christian faith.

How strangely an almost ecstatic mood of worship is evoked by the appearance of the Angel

of the Annunciation to the virgin upon whom the "dim religious light" of altar tapers casts an almost unearthly beauty as she kneels before the Holy of Holies of the Episcopal church with its altar adornments and sacramental objects for background, and the carven figure of the Christ gleaming white in the reredos above them!

How touchingly the Drama of the Ages is rekindled to a new and appealing significance on a Christmas morning in the Baptist church. A heavenly radiance casts a bright illumination over the whole scene, glows from the manger and bathes in effulgence the figures of Joseph and Mary bent above it, while the visitants from far places steal in, gift-bringing, and while the congregation sings: "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem." No word is spoken throughout the service. There is only the living, breathing story, and the immortal music. Nothing more is needed. A spirit of worship, intense, complete, possesses the spectator.

It was the minister of St. Paul's church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who, in describing that church's first production of a large Easter spectacle, said: "We had intended to have only a

THE THREE MARIES

FROM THE RESURRECTION PLAY, UNION METHODIST CHURCH, NEW YORK

Sunday School celebration, but as the rehearsals progressed, we were all so gripped by the beauty of the succeeding spectacles that we did the unheard-of thing: we gave up both Sunday School and church services to it.

The Union Methodist church of New York, in the very heart of the Broadway theatrical section, just a step removed from the ceaselessly streaming traffic of the Great White Way, was also moved not so long ago to "do the unheard of thing" in the adoption of the dramatized holiday celebration. This church announced an Easter miracle play, *The Resurrection*, to take the place of the Sunday evening sermon, on the same day, in fact, that the Cedar Rapids church presented the large cast pageant of the Easter season,—*The Dawning.*

Even in New York: even in the Broadway section of New York, where the churches, in the phraseology of some of their ministers, have to raise their voices emphatically in order to be heard, the announcement of this service was not without a corresponding stir of interest, and some unfriendly criticism from the more conservative. But even those who "went to scoff, remained to

pray." Even those who went delightedly to register the impressions that the play-acted service would have upon a congregation of conservative people, came away with a new regard for the ever-widening possiblities of the drama.

The Resurrection, as presented, was a fragmentary miracle play belonging to one of the old Medieval cycles, restored and modernized into intelligible English by its producer, Mrs. May Pashley Harris, of the Community Service organization. It was more than a play. The action was a living reality from the time the curtain was drawn aside to reveal Pilate brooding alone in the twilight, in his garden, over the condemnation of one in whom he had "found no fault." Caiphas comes to him there, the Centurion comes, and the Roman guard. The stage goes dark for a moment, and is lighted again to reveal the guard at the tomb, discussing the strange things that have been happening. There is a sudden seismic disturbance—a blinding flash of light. They are hurled to the ground. Then darkness. When it is light again, the empty tomb is revealed. Then the Three Maries come, bearing their gifts of incense and wailing their

lamentations. Finding the tomb empty they go to summon Peter and Paul. Organ music from Stainer's *Crucifixion* motivates the action of the scenes, with an ancient Hebrew *lament* introduced upon the entrance of the Searchers for the Body. When, finally, the Angel of the Lord appears before the little company, bathed in a flood of radiance, the triumphant chorus of Handel's *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*, swells forth.

It is over. The congregation arouse themselves to the world of everyday realities. There has been nothing suggestive of the theatrical. No one thought of the action as a "show" or an "entertainment." It was intense, pure drama fraught with a deep spiritual significance. So also was the mystery play, *Darkness and Dawn*, given by the youthful members of the Church School, St. John's Cathedral, Denver, Colorado, on Easter Eve, 1921. This play deals with the thoughts and feelings of the humble people and little children during the terrifying hours of Black Friday, on the night of the Entombment, and on the glorious dawn of the Resurrection Day. The three episodes take place on a hillside outside the wall of Jerusalem. In the first,

there gathers a company of little children who have lost their way in the sudden midday darkness which has descended upon the earth. Some are little girls from the humble homes of the city, who have come looking for wild flowers; some are shepherd lads; others are Romans, the sons of centurions. An older lad, brother to James, the Less, joins them there, and the daughter of Salome, who has come with her mother from beyond the Jordan following the Master. These tell that they have seen and heard of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

A Flower Spirit, symbolic of faith and resurrection, appears to the children through the darkness. It bids them believe and pray, and tells them to come back on the morning of the third day that they may see that the Christ has risen from the dead. It grows darker than ever after the Spirit has gone. The children cry aloud in fright. Then, to comfort them, Naaman and Rachel, children of Jerusalem, kneel and lead them in the prayer which "the Master taught to His friends." When it has ceased, the words of the *Easter Litany* are softly sung by a children's

chorus from the darkened auditorium, or nave of the church.

The second episode takes place under the deep blue sky on the night of the Entombment. Two Roman legionaries meet. The one, a veteran, returning from sentry duty in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, relates to the other who is going out to the same post, the awe-inspiring story of the opened tomb. In hushed voices, they discuss the things they have heard of the crucified Gallilean, and seem dimly to comprehend that "here was the Son of God."

In the third episode, at earliest dawn, the children gather again as the Marigold spirit has bidden them. They find golden yellow flowers abloom everywhere. As they stoop to gather them, the tidings of the Resurrection come. Mary, the mother of James, on her way from the city where she has been to tell the disciples of the empty tomb, is met by Mary Magdalen, returning from her meeting with the risen Lord. To them comes John after his visit to the Sepulchre. The children gather about and listen eagerly as the story unfolds, and at its close they

sing, "Jesus Christ is Risen To-day." Still singing, they pass down the aisles, followed by all of the others, and go out.

The rehearsals of *Darkness and Dawn* in Denver, were so arranged that each scene was presented twice during each week of Lent, an afternoon rehearsal being held for children and an evening rehearsal for adult participants. The entire Church School memorized the hymns, which formed a substantial part of the music, and sang them repeatedly in their regular morning services. This was one of the ways in which the play was made a Lenten offering of the entire junior congregation of the church.

In Boston, in the "Old Second Church" (Unitarian),—the church of Cotton Mather, of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and of many other illustrious men as well as of rich historical associations, a beautiful annual Christmas ritual has been introduced in the form of a Nativity pageant, known as the *Spirit of Christianity*. The service is richly diffused with Medieval feeling and Medieval art tradition which serve but to emphasize its profound appeal to the sense of the familiar—to our early childhood associations with

the occasion, or to the race recollections deep within us.

In form, *the Spirit of Christianity* is what has been called a synthetic spectacle. After the devotional exercises, the church lights are lowered, and a soft rose light bathes the chancel, into which come the Heavenly Host—a body of lovely and very human-looking little children. They take their places to the right and to the left, with two tiny cherubs posed in front of them against the chancel rail after the manner of Bellini angels. Then come the Holy Family, accompanied by little St. John bearing his slender cross and wearing a leopard skin. Two Guardian Angels, like those from a Fra Angelico frieze, also accompany them. The Madonna is clad in the traditional blue and white, her face lighted by the illumination from the Babe in her arms.

The minister reads the brief Scripture story describing the visit of the shepherds. Down a side aisle come the shepherds bearing homely gifts of bread and fruit. Then after another reading, the Three Kings move down the main aisle clad in stately garb and bearing their precious gifts of incense and myrrh. Moving forward to-

gether and leaving their humble and their costly gifts before the altar, shepherds and kings take their places in the group, completing a spectacle of great beauty of form and color.

Then the passage from Matthew is read, describing the flight into Egypt. Joseph, leaning on his staff in sleep, receives the angelic warning, touches Mary, and together, led by the angels, they go out, while the congregation sings: "Hark, the Herald Angel Sings."

When the last sound has died away, down the middle aisle in perfect silence comes the Angel of Light, Christianity, with a golden halo on her head, and white wings symbolizing inspiration. Thrice she sounds her golden trumpet, accompanied by choral "Hosannahs." When she reaches the altar, she lays her trumpet aside, and taking the central lighted candle, she advances with it to meet the apostles who now move down the central aisle to the strains of the Grail March from *Parsifal*. One by one, their candles are lighted from hers. Then comes the recessional, led by the cherubs, the Heavenly Host, and the Apostles. The Spirit of Christianity follows, and then the shepherds, the Kings, the crucifier,

"THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY"

As Annually Presented in the "Old Second Church," Boston

the almoners, the flag bearer, the choir, and the robed lay assistants. All move down the aisles of the impressive Georgian structure chanting a Thirteenth century choral from the French: "Veni Emmanuel."

Different in character, but an equally eloquent presentation of the meaning of Christ's coming, is the Christmas *mystery* play, *Eagerheart*, which has been widely used as a church service, and was recently given on Christmas at St. George's, the oldest Episcopal church, of New York City.

Christmas and Easter, as the two greatest church holidays, have furnished occasion for the greatest number of ritualistic dramas. Other church holidays and church observances are beginning to be so celebrated, and doubtless will be, more and more. (In fact, indications point to the development of a wide-spread festival idea, where a series of religious spectacles or scenes more or less connected will be "set in a frame of song and service" for presentation on appropriate occasions. During Holy Week, for instance, there is already being given in at least one center, a series of "Six Passions" centering around the theme of the Crucifixion.)

DRAMA IN RELIGIOUS SERVICE

As an Ash Wednesday evening service, recently, Calvary Church, New York City, presented the morality play, *The Hour Glass*, in illustration of the Lenten text: Repentance Bringeth Mercy. The story, as it unfolds, is that of a famous professor widely known as an atheist. In the noonday of his proud power, an angel suddenly appears to him (beautiful against the altar, in her rose-colored robes) and warns him that he has but one hour of life in which to redeem his misspent years. He does redeem them, miraculously, as the last sands are running.

Twice, in St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, also one of the oldest churches in New York, the Feast of the Annunciation has been observed by the presentation of a ritual dance. The symbolism of the service was easy to understand. The first of the interpretative movements was "The Heavenly Guest of the Four Corners of the Earth." The second was "The Lighting of the Holy Ninefold Candlestick." The third was "The Heavenly Call of the Virgin Spirit of the Earth," and the fourth, "The Virgin Spirit of the Earth Pays Homage to the Holy Mother."

This is the same church in which, in 1921,

Edith Wynn Mattheson and Charles Rann Kennedy with their full company of dramatic artists, presented *Everyman*. In this "drama of the soul of man in conflict," the "High Father of Heaven sends Death to summons all creatures to come and give account of their lives in this world."

Another one of the country's pioneer religious services, entirely different, but no less moving, was the production in the Union Church, of Worcester, Massachusetts, of a pageant depicting the early religious life of the Jews: *In the Days of the Judges*. The pageant was written and produced by a Worcester woman, Mrs. Annie Russell Marble, and dealt with Old Testament history of the period between the death of Joshua and the coronation of Saul: from the lapse of the Jews into heathen worship to their final triumphant return to the faith of Jehovah. A symbolic as well as an historic aspect transformed the spectacle into a service of worship. The ritualistic nature of the production was intensified by the music which was taken from some of the oldest and most familiar cantatas and oratorios of such great composers as Handel, Da Costa, Saint Saens, and Gounod. The episode dealing

with the soldiers of Gideon was fitly embellished by "The Trump of Israel Sounding," from Saint Saens', "Soldiers of Gideon." The episode dealing with the story of Ruth was made more impressive by the use of Gounod's solo: "Entreat me not to leave thee," and by Barnby's beautiful "Sing to the Lord of the Harvest," and the Bridal March from *Rebekah.* Handel's triumphant "Thy King Shall Rejoice," was used for the coronation anthem. The processional and recessional hymn was Dykes' "Holy, Holy, Holy," which also furnished a subdued motive to the entire production.

I Am the Light of the World, written and produced by the same author in another Worcester church, and elsewhere, is a beautiful and very simple series of significant scenes from the life of Christ cast into pageant form to be used as a Christmas or an Easter celebration.

Such are a few instances of liturgical drama as it appeals to the congregation and the casual spectator in those churches which, like St. Paul's in Cedar Rapids, have been moved to do the unheard-of thing . . . have been gripped by the appealing beauty that is gradually pushing its

way into the consciousness of church people as the new form of worship. In hundreds, yes, in thousands of churches, in every part of the country to-day, the visual appeal is being adopted: the drama is being adopted as being particularly fitted as outward garb for the new spiritual message of our times.

Sometimes, particularly in the Episcopal church, the most impressive liturgical services of the new order, are no more than a mere prototype of the drama, much as they must have been in those early days of the Christian church while yet the disciples were on earth,—an embodying in the outward form of symbolic action of the deepest inner instincts to worship. Such is the Lenten Service of Lights as it has been held in the Calvary Episcopal church at New York. The raising of the Cross during the singing of the "sorrows of Death" and during the rendition of the Funeral March—the invisible "Alleluias" voiced as responses to the Resurrection hymn sung by a choir boy who remains kneeling in front of the altar after the recessional—the symbolic star and cross of light, and the darkening of the church as the service proceeds—all these are sug-

gestive of the church services in the centuries when beautiful action embellished the little understood Latin text.

The minister in Brooklyn who was moved to paint a colossal over-altar picture of the Saviour praying in the wilderness amidst the clashing confusion of temptations, and display it in illustration of his sermon on Repentance, felt the same impulse toward visualization which is animating many other church men to-day and leading to the *religious dramatic service*, which, in its true interpretation, we believe to be beautiful and altogether worthy.

If the true reverential significance of religious drama has not been sufficiently emphasized, let Miss Elizabeth Grimball, one of the soundest authorities on the subject, and a pioneer producer, define it:

"A play in the church is never to be thought of as an entertainment, or even as only educational. It must be in a church for the one reason that it is an act of worship,—something done in remembrance of a Supreme Being, manifested through a great truth in presentation. Underlying all dramatic ritual of temple worship in the

early days of the race, was the ideal of prayer, and so, to-day, the cause of dramatic production in a church must be a desire to worship more intensely."

CHAPTER II

THE MANIFOLD MISSION OF CHURCH DRAMA

"TRUE, good form," says Carlyle, "is to be distinguished from the false as earnest solemnity is distinguished from empty, mocking pageantry." As more and more churches turn to-day to using the dramatized appeal in their religious services, it does not seem amiss to reiterate this truth. Much more material is becoming available in the name of religious drama, since there is felt to be a general demand for such, than is of sound artistic worth. Many churches are following the common impulse toward the "acted out" service without sufficient attention to the technical problems involved. It is easy to remember that reverence and Christian humility of spirit are assisted by the arts without also remembering that people cannot possibly be led to "revere the works of God through the bungling and imperfect works of man," or

through the works that are ill-conceived for the purposes they are intended to fulfill.

The minister who illustrated his sermon by leading a live ram into the pulpit on a Sunday morning and sacrificing it before the horrified eyes of his congregation, represents, of course, an extreme example of bad taste upon which it is not worth while to dwell. So do the few instances of stagey theatricality of which we hear. In general, the problem of fitness to purpose—its own particular purpose—is the one which confronts the church that has arrived at the point of selecting dramatic material. Central agencies have been and will continue to be developed, as will be described later on, for simplifying the problems of the church production group. Carefully selected material is being made available, and there is a choice of material which carries adequate instruction for its production by the church group of limited dramatic training.

It is necessary that a clear distinction be made between the true drama of worship, with which we have been chiefly concerned thus far, and all of the various forms of religious drama which have been widely used in church extension work

during the past few years. The dramatized Sunday School or Bible study lesson, the "missionary" drama, the "church propaganda" play, and the secular play which is peculiarly adapted to presentation by the church dramatic group by reason of the ethical principles it illustrates,—all of these belong in the latter category.

Classifications overlap. Some plays might conceivably belong in two, or even three of them. But the manner and spirit of the productions would differ. One of the greatest ideals of "reverential" drama, as it has been used in church services in every part of the country, is the creation of a harmonious mass spirit by congregational participation in the sacred music which is used to develop and carry forward the action. In the most beautiful of the church holiday services which have assumed a dramatic form, the action is silent, and its symbolic significance is intensified by the introduction of familiar solos, chorales, and hymns.

In the Days of the Judges, was fittingly presented as a church service, as described, because of the effective use of religious symbolism in its production, the deeply spiritual interpretation of

the material, and the devotional nature of the accompanying and underlying musical themes. Otherwise developed, it would serve the advanced Bible study as authentic religious historical material for production. *The Hour Glass*, not originally intended for church production, became so by the symbolic use of the altar as a setting for the Angel of the Lord, who at the last, drew the erring man upward and toward it.

In some Protestant churches, notably (though not exclusively) the Episcopal, where more symbolic forms of worship and more visual appeal services have been adhered to through the centuries, than elswhere, only liturgical drama in its strict sense is considered worthy to be brought into the chancel—before the altar. The sanctuary must in some sense be the psychological center of interest of the action, else the drama,—however eloquent in its appeal in behalf of the church, —is more fittingly presented in the parish hall, church school auditorium, or assembly hall.

On the other hand, there are the churches which do not have ritualistic services, which do not have a chancel and an altar. In these, the same impulse which has led, recently, to the

introduction of greater beauty and spiritual appeal into worship through the use of the drama, naturally manifests itself in a somewhat different form. There is a Baptist church in New York city to-day which belongs to this group, and which frankly owes its continued existence to the adoption of a Sunday evening drama-sermon enacted by its young people. This drama-sermon, once every four weeks, takes the place of the regular sermon. The half hour before its presentation is spent by the players in prayer that they may have more humility and worthiness constantly in their high mission of so presenting the Bible stories as to make them living realities in the lives of church members and outsiders. The annual program of this religious dramatic group includes a variety of material, all designed in some way or other to further the work of the church, but all of it, except the drama sermon, is presented elsewhere than on the pulpit platform.

"What purpose is the religious play to fulfill?" the church group may fittingly ask itself. In fact, wherever the new religious drama has had time to take roots and grow, all of the types

Courtesy of N. Y. S. S. Association

"THE POT OF OIL"

A Dramatization of Bible Text: Col. 3:20 and 2 Kings 4:1-7, Produced by the New York Sunday School

of plays mentioned,—"educational," "missionary," "social," and "reverential" are being developed. It is the latter which seems to us the new and especially significant indication of our increasing level of spirituality. And it is in the light of it that the whole church dramatic program takes on a new significance and offers vast new possibilities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATIONAL DRAMA

The "visual appeal," of recent years so widely recognized as an essential of educational method from kindergarten to college, has been widely utilized also in religious education. Nowhere has it better demonstrated its power to fertilize the roots of child life down where the mystery of mental and spiritual growth began.

As long ago as 1905, Mrs. Marie J. Hobart began training her kindergarten classes in an Episcopal chapel of New York city through dramatic interpretation of the lessons, thus becoming the pioneer user, so far as is known, of religious educational drama at a date much earlier than the general educational value of dramatics was recognized. To authorities better informed than we

in matters pedagogical must be left the task of elaborating upon the possibilities in such teaching. (In fact authoritative books upon the subject have already been written.) The informally dramatized Bible or Sunday School lesson becomes a part of the present discussion only when it is subsequently elaborated and perfected as a public production.

Miss Elisabeth Edland, director of the experimental dramatic program of the New York Sunday School Association, has perhaps had as large an experience in the spontaneous dramatization of religious material as anyone in the country, working as she does with groups, large and small, drawn from the Sunday Schools of the Protestant denominations of Greater New York and vicinity. Not only Biblical material, but material suitable for religious holiday production and that especially fitted to inculcate the principles of right living, is developed and used by these groups. The most successfully developed dramas are the ones chosen to be more highly elaborated and given public production at demonstration performances held in the Methodist Building auditorium and elsewhere. As many as 4,000 people have wit-

nessed such performances when they have been held in larger places. As a result of them a general demand is created for the printed plays and for assistance or advice in their production by local Sunday School groups.

Even in the largest and "showiest" productions of this kind, great care is exercised toward the development of the group dramatic instinct rather than the development of individual dramatic talent. "Enthusiasm and imaginative response are the life of such dramatic expression," Miss Edland says; "and the appeal must be kept constantly new. It is almost impossible to set down rules governing such dramatization, or to generalize about it. The moment the work becomes stereotyped into the application of a mere handful of set rules, the entire life and spirit of it are lost. The children grasp the ideas of the stories and act them out after their own interpretation. It is the ones which appeal most forcibly to them, which they interpret most interestingly and which are rehearsed and given finished form."

A distinctive work was done by St. Bartholomew's church, of New York, over a number of years, in the production of Living Pictures.

These Living Pictures were spontaneous dramatizations of Bible stories by a club of boys whose acting became so excellent as to attract large audiences. They have repeatedly proved the occasion of the same sort of revelations which Miss Edland encounters in her work and of which she gives a typical incident.

In a little play of the Easter season, the children planned, largely, their own costumes and "business." A group of little girls, as nature children, acted out their grief over the news of the Crucifixion as brought them by the Wind. When the further news came that He was not dead, but had risen, they were joyous. The round-faced little sun (with the tissue paper beams which her own tiny fingers had devised, radiating from her head), went about again beaming happily. It was her own idea, born of the inspiration of the moment, further to express the beneficence of the sunlight on that morning, by opening and closing her small fingers as she held them aloft over the heads of the "flowers."

The material here dealt with has to do almost exclusively with Protestant activities. This does not mean that the Catholic church has not felt

the potentialities of the religious dramatic movement. Biblical plays have been widely produced in parochial schools and Catholic church halls, both in religious educational activities and as a part of church-social programs, especially the former. A strongly built up national Art Commission gives particular attention to the furthering of church interests by the drama. But there is little opportunity, in a service as rigidly fixed by form as is the Catholic ritual, for religious drama in the particular sense in which we are looking at it.

The Hoboken Passion Play, produced annually by a Catholic parish group in a hall built especially for the purposes, is the outstanding example of that type of drama in America. It deals with the Condemnation, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, and the subsequent life and miracles of Saint Veronica. Sixty thousand people are said to have witnessed its production during the Lenten season of 1922, including the Governor and many other notable people. This is a religious educational drama, but is not strictly amateur, conforming rather to professional theatrical standards in its production and settings, and be-

ing presented to the public on a commercial basis, although acted largely by the young people of the parish.

The Jewish synagogues of America have, also, made wide use of the drama recently for educational purposes, dramatizing Old Testament stories and stories of Jewish religious life, ancient and modern, for and with their young people. Rabbi Levi, of the Temple Israel, Boston, has produced religious pageants in which as many as 3,000 children took part. In New York, Myron Sattler is the youthful director of large groups of players organized around at least two Free Synagogues. He is one of the leading spirits in a project for dramatizing the history of Jewish life from the days of Abraham and Isaac to the present time with a prophetic epilogue of the future. The Jewish publishing houses are unable to supply the demand for special holiday dramas and pageants. The publishing department of the Young Judea Movement reports eighty orders for copies of one Purim play this year.

These plays of Jewish life are notably ethical in character, or are religious folk-dramas. But

the student of literature cannot fail to look a little beyond the present struggle between the old and the new in Jewish faith, and foresee a brilliant renaissance of the primitive and highly spiritual drama of Hebrew religion. The early Catholic church ritual was no more intensely dramatic in its essential form than was the primitive synagogue service. There are also interesting survivals of the neo-Hebrew *mysteries* of the Middle Ages.

THE MISSIONARY PLAY—THE RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA PLAY

There are few churches in the country that have not at some time or other given a missionary play or pageant. Almost without exception, home and foreign missionary headquarters publish lists of dramatic material illustrative of their work and missions work in general, and attempt, to some extent, to furnish some facilities for their production. There are a number of sources from which very simple foreign costumes may be rented when the local group is unable, for lack of time or any other reason, to provide them.

There has been a remarkable increase in the

literary value of the missionary play in general since the whole subject of religious drama has begun to claim the attention of national church bodies. Humanness, a sense of humor, and an appreciation of the other point of view, are to be found in much of the material available from the national sources elsewhere listed, carrying the lesson that missionary work can never be done in a casual, slip-shod fashion, or in a holier-than-thou spirit. In the delightful play *A Mock Trial, Heathen Nations vs. American Christian*, the Grand Jury of the State of Heathendom officially prefers charges against the American Church Member. Mr. Half Hearted Christian is arraigned and found guilty of the crime of Neglect. Among the witnesses against him are a Slave Girl, an American Indian, Mrs. Ching Lung, an Immigrant to New York, and citizens of Japan, India and Africa.

Standards of costuming for the missionary plays are also being raised. It is beginning to be felt that church societies have been guilty of a carelessness in the matter of costuming calculated to rouse the antagonism of the peoples represented. Sound precedent is being established

in high places where it is felt that with the easy accessibility of libraries, art museums, and educational extension departments of all kinds, the smallest church group should not only be able to costume its own plays correctly but should make the matter of correct costuming one of the most valuable phases of its work. How much more in sympathy we, ourselves, feel with some little, remote handful of people on the other side of the world when we have had the patience to search through numberless volumes, to consult numberless prints and illustrations of various kinds, in order to learn their daily habits and customs, their methods of dressing themselves, and the implements of their everyday activities!

The play of propaganda for religion and the church (it seems difficult to classify it otherwise) is of rather more recent growth. Perhaps the largest scale production that would come within this category was the Nation-Wide pageant put forth by the Episcopal church as a part of its campaign in 1919. Every Episcopal parish and mission in the country was asked to present this pageant: *The Builders of the City of God*, either in the longer version as a substitute for

the Sunday morning service, or in the shorter version preceding or following the sermon. More than a thousand productions were given on a single Sunday.

This pageant offers an excellent model to the students of religious drama who are devising local celebrations. It furnishes, also, a good illustration of the Episcopal idea of making the central theme of church drama, the note of worship. In the shorter version, there are at least fifteen characters, including the Spirit of the Nation-Wide Campaign, the priest, workmen, sisters, deaconnesses, nurses and teachers besides groups of children representing the various nationalities among which the church is carrying on its mission. The Spirit appeals for workers in the Building of the City of God. The workmen, convinced that God Himself is summoning them, offer themselves to be employed each according to his particular skill as carpenter, mason, mechanic and the like.

After the Spirit and her attendants go out, and as the priest, the workmen and the church people stand marvelling over the vision and the call to service, the children representing other nations begin to draw near. With a call to the assem-

bled group of church workers to accept responsibility for fitting these stones into the City of God, and a response from the workmen, nurses, and others, the "nations" are received into the sanctuary and placed as "pillars in the temple." The creed, the Lord's Prayer and other prayers follow, and during the singing of the final hymn, the entire procession moves out, slowly and with dignity and deliberate unison.

The application of the highest type of Christian idealism to world needs and world problems is embodied in Dr. H. Augustine Smith's widely produced pageant, *The City Beautiful*, a recent notable production of which was staged in Carnegie Hall, New York by St. Thomas's Episcopal church. The central idea of *The City Beautiful* is progress toward the Ideal City. The first two scenes are Biblical, depicting the triumphal entry of David into the City of Jerusalem, and presenting a symbolic scene of Palm Sunday. Subsequent episodes depict the Crusaders attempting to wrest the Holy City from the Infidel and the Forces of Evil in possession of the Modern City, and the coming of the representatives of modern Christian civilization. The last episode

forecasts the City Beautiful when the streets shall be full of happy children, and where "Justice, Righteousness and Love shall prevail."

Sometimes, as was the case recently in a New Jersey church, a large scale pageant of this kind is both an appeal for Christian effort and a benefit production through which funds are raised for some particular church pledge.

CHURCH SOCIAL CENTER DRAMA

It is worthy of note that whenever the church dramatic group exists in any form, general church interest in the drama and in the possibilities of dramatic expression, is greatly increased. Church social center drama, already of sturdy dealing, in the church basement group, as modern life has seldom dealt, with the materials immemorably vibrant with the potentialities of Art!

Lately, ceremonies, never before thought of as other than secular have begun to embody religious ritual. This is particularly notable in the Sunday ceremonials of the Camp Fire Girls. The Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., and similar organizations have for some time embodied Christian-social ideals in devotional pageants and dramas.

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THE NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN PAGEANT

There have also been numerous examples of Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts similarly presenting the Christian citizenship principles underlying their rules. But the newer tendency as best exemplified in the Camp Fire ritual differs from these as liturgical drama differs from the more familiar forms of religious drama.

For the most part the Sunday ritual, wherever held, is non-sectarian, and is adopted with equal interest and participated in equally by Catholics, Protestants, Christian Scientists and girls of Jewish faith, though it is always deeply symobolical and spiritual in nature. Biblical readings are chosen to illustrate the Seven Laws of Camp Fire. The ceremonial lighting of the candles, the singing of such ceremonial songs as *Burn*, *Fire*, *Burn*, with symbolic dramatic action, the enacting in pantomime of simple stories such as *Ruth and Naomi* or *Moses in the Rushes*, and the singing of hymns, are all features of the programs. Such programs have a definite artistic unity and a definite idea back of them as may be seen by a glance at the specimen services of this character which are printed in the Book of the Camp Fire Girls. Local programs, however, take on an addi-

tional significance, and often even an additional beauty when the girls are encouraged to rewrite the ceremonials, incorporating into them their own individual imaginative conceptions, their own symbols and their own poetry.

A beautiful ceremonial developed as a Protestant church service in Chicago, has for its central and most impressive rite, the Lighting of the Candles. To the three traditional Camp Fire candles of Work, Health and Love, a Christ candle has been added. In the words of the Guardian of that group:

"We use the largest white candle obtainable, placed always in the center of our candle board. The first time we used it, it was lighted with the words (John 8: 12) 'Then spake Jesus, saying: I am the Light of the World: He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' This candle is never extinguished in the ceremonial but after the rest have been extinguished, I always advance, holding this candle aloft and reciting the words of Jesus from John 9: 5 and Matthew 5: 14-16: 'Jesus said: As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the World, but returning to the Father He com-

manded us, saying: *Ye* are the Light of the World.' 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and may glorify your Father which is in heaven.' " In all of their other candle ceremonies, the candles are lighted from the Christ candle.

As an example of the way in which ritual develops ritual, the Christmas ceremonial of this Camp Fire group has developed into a thing of particular significance. One feature is the offering. Each girl places at the foot of the Christ candle the money which she has saved, as the result of a month of self-sacrifice, to devote to some worthy cause decided upon by the group. An Easter morning Sunrise ceremonial in the same church and by the same girls again includes the sacrifice offering placed around the Christ Candle.

CHAPTER III

"EVERY CHURCH BASEMENT A LITTLE THEATER WORKSHOP"

Over the door, then, you could write these two words of Horace,—*"integar Vitae,"—wholeness* of life, *symmetry* of life, *soundness* of life, and therefore *poise* and *strength* of life.

—Youman's: *Shackled Youth.*

FOR all practical purposes and all really useful and worthwhile ends, the activity of the dramatic group must be constant. And as soon as it becomes a feature of the regular *extra-religious* organization of the church, the necessity immediately arises for making it representative of the church in general. Mr. Phillips E. Osgood, who has been instrumental in shaping the policies of the dramatic production in the Episcopal churches of the country, advocates the early formation of a Religious Dramatic Council, or Committee, on which shall be represented members of every prominent unit of the entire church

organization. Mr. Osgood has adequately demonstrated the successful working out of such a Council in his own former parish,—that of the chapel of the Mediator, Philadelphia. Without this general representation of church sentiment, the dramatic work may show a tendency to overdevelop on the experimental side at the expense of the church service side, especially if it is in the hands of youthful enthusiasts.

It is the opinion of Mr. Percy Burrell, who is also a member of the national Episcopal organization for furthering the interests of church drama and head of the Community Service (Incorporated) Bureaus of Educational Dramatics, that the church which is ready to begin an all-round religious dramatic program should inventory its workable material in terms of: (a) human assets; (b), physical equipment; and, (c), co-operating agencies.

Taking for granted that church sentiment is *for* a dramatic program as one of the expressions of that perennial creativity of religion," and that at least an informal committee has been organized, what are the next steps? In following Mr. Burrell's suggestion, we arrive at:

HUMAN ASSETS

The first consideration is that of the director. "If there weren't one already on the ground, there would n't be any plans," someone has said. But that is not strictly accurate; although the matter of the right director is one of so much importance that not only is everything else insignificant in comparison: everything else actually succeeds or fails as the director succeeds or fails. He must be the court of final resort, with jurisdiction supreme over the various subordinate departments of costuming, lighting, scenery, as well as over the casting and rehearsing of the plays.

He or she must be an organizing genius with executive and social qualities highly developed. He or she must have the technical knowledge on the one side and the high religious ideal on the other if a church drama of beauty and integrity is to grow out of the experimental program. In the church basement theater, as elsewhere, the person who has loaned the most important "property" will fail at the last moment to have it delivered, an entire family of prominence will take offense about the relative importance of "parts"

as evident at dress rehearsal, the lights will all be burned out at the final light rehearsal. In the church basement theater, as elsewhere, the director must save the day.

Where is such a paragon to come from? We hear someone ask. There are various sources. The churches in or near large cities, as well as some churches in smaller towns have drawn heavily upon the community theater, "little" theater, and art theater groups where they have found a spirit of splendid co-operation and generous assistance, even actual leadership, such as has made the productions revelations of "the good; the beautiful, and the true." Other churches have had access to the dramatic leaders of large universities or colleges in their vicinity.

But even where these are not available, the church may still find adequate leadership for its dramatic program. Dramatic training is a recognized part of Normal Training School and college courses and the special courses of preparation for recreational and physical training leadership. It has begun to be included, as will be described later on, in schools of religious education, and special short term schools for Sunday School

workers. This means that the high school teacher, the playground supervisor, or the Sunday School teacher may be a potential director. With the clearing house service that is being established by church organizations of national scope, and with such assistance as is being furnished by the Religious Drama Department of the national Drama League and by the Department of Educational Extension of some state colleges, the director's problem is greatly simplified. Many competent "little" theater workers are making admirable directors,—workers who no more than a year ago would have hesitated to undertake church work because the formulation of a definite "body of doctrine" covering the subject had not begun.

It is a notable fact that nowhere has the religious program gone forward with more efficiency than when under the directorship of the minister. Dr. Eugene Rodman Shippen, of the Second Unitarian Church, Boston, has proved this in the annual *Nativity* production. Mr. Phillips E. Osgood proved it before his work advanced from the local to the national in scope.

In discussing the minister-director, it will be

Courtesy of N. Y. S. S. Association

A SPONTANEOUS DRAMATIZATION GROUP

The New York Sunday School Association

worth while here to look at the achievement of Mr. Milton William Pullen, pastor of a New York Baptist church already mentioned, who on one Sunday night of each month for the past three years has yielded up the pulpit to his young parishoners who "put their innate desires for self expression in some form of visual beauty at the service of the congregation at large": who, in short, produce a drama sermon. This minister, finding his church at a vital crisis, decided that it was time to take fresh hold upon the imagination of the young people, even if the manner of doing this violated (as at that time it seemed to do) many established church conventions. He chose his text and developed his sermon thereafter as formerly, but cast it into dramatic form rather than oratorical and gave its presentation over to his young peoples' organization.

"They delight," Mr. Pullen says, "in the presentation, and faithfully learn parts, rehearse, receive criticisms, etc. I direct the production in every detail, also taking responsibility for costuming, scene shifting, and the display and control of the lights as well as the prompting. For thirty minutes before the sermon the entire cast

is on its knees in prayer for God's blessing that they may be enabled to *preach* a sermon.

"We find that when the night comes around, the church is filled to capacity and the congregation listens with reverent attention throughout the production."

Just how successful this directorship has been is illustrated by the further quotation: "Since we have made the drama-sermon a regular part of our winter Sunday evening program we have watched our church climb from hopelessness (with scarcely a dozen in the evening congregation) to life and success with the church filled to capacity. Does the production produce spiritual results? During the three years we have produced drama-sermons we have baptisted nearly eighty new members, have added scores to our various activities, have multiplied our giving by almost ten. All due to the drama sermons? No, but they have played their vital part; and our hope and prayer is that other pastors and churches may get the same good from this method of preaching that we get."

Once the director problem is solved, the assembling material for the producing group is com-

paratively easy. The well developed church center program will have its card-file record of talent available for entertainment purposes. This will be a valuable asset. The Drama Committee will also be able to recommend individuals from their various departments, and the "volunteer" method has been found so successful almost everywhere that the problem becomes one of elimination.

An expedient used in other social and religious educational activities,—one which might prove of value to the director who is not closely acquainted with the church personnel, is the questionnaire. This questionnaire might read:

Are you interested in the development of church drama and an experimental church basement theater?

Have you had experience in dramatic or pageantry production? How much?

Have you had special training that would be useful in acting, costuming, making scenery, or managing lights?

Have you had special musical training?

Will you join in making a church basement dramatic organization a success in every way?

So varied are the requirements for the different departments of production that every group within the church will be capable of making its valuable contribution first or last.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT

When we come to inventory the actual physical church plant and its adaptability to dramatic workshop uses, we find that many of those built during the last half of the last century afford facilities that few unendowed "little" theater organizations unrelated to some larger and more permanent body, can aspire to. With the present church social organizations of all sorts pointing the way to highly developed activities, and with the widely felt, but as yet vaguely apprehended ideal toward a great inclusive Christian art, this is most significant.

The larger buildings have basement auditoria with adequate seating capacities and space for the development of ample stage facilities. The oldest Baptist church in Jersey City, for instance (which is an old city) has a basement assembly hall which has lent itself perfectly to all experimental theater purposes. Comedies, Sunday

School plays, Christian Endeavor plays, and Missionary dramas have been produced there, and rehearsals held for the church drama subsequently to be staged on the pulpit platform of the church proper. With a floor-level seating capacity something over 200 and with a good sized gallery, benefit performances in such an assembly hall have been found satisfactorily remunerative. There are hundreds of such halls in such churches waiting to be utilized, and hundreds of parish halls almost if not equally well adapted to the development of dramatic programs. Small, adjacent class rooms, club rooms and conference rooms afford adequate workshop space.

One of the most beautiful missionary plays in the history of production was worked out in the Infant Class Sunday School room from which the small chairs had been removed. Another annual religious pageant given by a small church organization is developed and staged in the Masonic Lodge hall, while many smaller church groups imbued with the idea of social salvation and the "community ministry" are frankly using the church body proper for dramatic production when no other place is available. One small communi-

ity in the West desiring, at the end of the war, to erect a memorial building in honor of its hero dead, and realizing the great need for both church and social hall, cut the Gordian knot by placing the pulpit at one end of the simple little hall and the stage at the other, and making the seats reversible!

Mr. Claude Bragdon has recently said that if every community in the United States had but an endowed center to which all of the young people could bring their artistic ideas and ideals and contribute them, under adequate leadership, to some worthy democratic theatrical undertaking, it would solve one of the greatest problems of our present day civilization,—that of our cultural and spiritual starvation. It is our intention to suggest here that the church should be, and should become more and more this "endowed plant," which is already largely financed when its "overhead" problem is solved thus simply. Here, the dramatic group may carry forward its experimental program at leisure working toward high ideals on the technical side, and as it does so, gradually contributing to an enriched spiritual and social life for the people.

LITTLE THEATER WORKSHOP

The church basement workshop of which we are thinking is not merely a physical center from which dramatic programs are to issue. Therein, it differs, perhaps, most widely from the ordinary theater workshop which, perforce, must think of all of its work in terms of play night. Normally the amateur dramatic group must present a certain number of plays in its season for the benefit of its subscribers. It must, therefore, as a measure of expediency, have much of its incidental work done by outsiders. Its whole effort is bent toward artistic effect in the finished product. The church basement dramatic organization, on the other hand, is one of experiment in human values, social values, spiritual values, creative values. Much, if not all of the work incident to production, is done by members.

Come with me, if you will, to the workshop where a group of 'teen age boys are busy constructing a set of stage panels under the general direction of the "preacher" who comes and goes as they work but has no air at all of being "bossing the job." The careful attention given to the sawing and fitting of each strip of lumber is a revelation of boy character. Each panel is in per-

fect plumb and fits perfectly on to the adjoining panel, because the young carpenters know if it does not, all of the work and material will have been wasted. Each boy is on his mettle; his pride of craftsmanship is aroused; his "gang" propensities are finding perfectly satisfactory outlet in this huge new sort of conspiracy to "make shows." Each boy knows that some of the workers will be chosen to help the minister's wife stretch the canvas and decorate the finished "set," and the healthy element of competition is not absent.

In the next room the girls' club is busy with "the lady from the museum," who is an authority on costuming. Under her direction, bolts of cheesecloth which has been previously hand-dyed to beautiful rainbow tints, are being transformed into costumes. A frieze of Bible pictures in color, tacked around the wall, furnishes the models upon which the costumes are based.

These are the sort of activities which give the young people of the cities, "used only to the sordid sights and sounds, and the unlovelinesss of street and tenement," a store of beautiful thoughts and feelings upon which they can safely

A CHURCH BASEMENT WORKSHOP GROUP

First Baptist Church, Jersey City

build: and give, also release to the spirit of the youth bound in, circumscribed by the dwarfing ugliness of so much of our rural life to-day. If the church basement "workshop" did no more than this, its existence would be amply justified in many places where the "young people" problem is an acute one.

"By actual participation in the performances," an eminent authority on the value of educational drama has said, "girls are safely guided through the stage struck period, and boys have an opportunity to gratify their love of admiration by playing daring parts to audiences far outnumbering their usual neighborhood following."

The "workshop" of which we are thinking is a radiating center of activities reaching far into the educational and cultural life of the community as well as enriching the church social program and beautifying the church service. It is the inevitable tendency of the church production group, given their physical plant, to grow and develop leadership from among the young people of the church for dramatized story hours not only in, but far outside the church proper,—in hospitals, in orphanages and on public playgrounds.

CO-OPERATING AGENCIES

A very discerning gentleman has said lately, in discussing the innate kinship between art expression, and religious expression, that although the contrary was popularly supposed to be true, workers in art are much more keenly sympathetic toward the cause of religion than religionists are toward the cause of art.* Almost without exception, the most impressive liturgical dramas, the most successful church basement dramatic groups and the livest church producing organizations, owe much of their success to the splendid co-operation and the hearty, unselfish effort of some person or persons within the community whose particular training or experience has been along art lines. The woman who has lived in the Orient and has been a student of Oriental folk-lore; the lecturer on the history of art; the costume designer; the specialist in expression or pantomime; the painter: these are only a few of such "co-operating agencies" as almost every church will find ready and eager to further its program. The school art departments, community musical organizations and local arts and crafts groups, are

* *Art and Religion,* by Rev. Von Ogden Vogt.

others. High ideals of the democratization of art on the part of people in all such work, and the paucity of opportunity which there has been, hitherto, for genuine service, places a wealth of expert aid at the disposal of the big-visioned church group.

HOW TO START

First work may most effectively be done, it is thought, and a wide and general interest in the church dramatic program aroused through the staging of a big-scale, but simple, religious pageant. The pageant should be selected by the director, with the aid of the small committee which she will find necessary to organize—a committee acting in a friendly, supporting capacity, and which may well include people within the church and outside authorities along the various lines. The pageant may then be talked over with the dramatic council and a discussion held as to casting.

Mr. Lyman Bayard's Christmas and Easter pageants have been widely and very successfully used by beginning groups without dramatic experience. They are simple to produce, but may

be produced elaborately by an experienced director. They come with full directions for staging. Both of these pageants have been acted with beautiful religious feeling by groups of amateurs who were without technical guidance. "The Blessed Birthday," and "Thy Kingdom Come", by Miss Florence Converse, have been used as first productions at Christmas and Easter time where a director with some experience has been available.

The national Methodist organization proposes to furnish leadership and assume responsibility for training local directors in such cities as may wish to have some such large scale demonstration production as a Missionary Exposition held. Such training might be financed by a city-wide union of Methodist churches, or an inter-denominal union. The Pilgrim Players, of the First Congregational church, Evanston, Illinois, (a pioneer producing group with a high artistic standard), has been making tours to other towns with the idea of testing out church sentiment regarding the inauguration of local dramatic programs. During Holy Week this year, the players produced the Drama League prize play,—"The Rock," on a circuit of Iowa churches.

Once organization is effected, the church group is finding that inspiration lies everywhere, and that valuable assistance comes from the most unexpected places, illustrating the truth of a statement made by Dr. William Norman Guthrie, of New York city, from the pulpit not long ago, to the effect that if the church would only make demands of the artists and of the people, it would have a beautiful and effective ritual for the celebration of every day in its calendar. When can this happen, and where—how can it happen, until the ideal of one church worker be realized, —the one whose dream it is that "every church basement in the country become a little theatre workshop!"

CHAPTER IV

THE PRODUCTION PLANT IN OPERATION

I. *The Stage, Its Setting and Lighting*

ONE of the first tests of the ingenuity of the producing group will be the adaptation of its programs to the stage space available, whether this be in church basement social hall, in parish hall or Church School auditorium. It is highly desirable that the stage should be as large as possible, with a width of, say, up to forty or fifty feet and with a proscenium opening twenty or twenty-five feet wide and not less than ten or twelve feet in height. For the intimate production, this opening can be reduced by the use of an inner proscenium.

Many church producing groups, on the other hand, are achieving programs of distinction on stages not over twenty-five feet, and with a proscenium opening not over fifteen feet. Some outstandingly good experimental work has even been

done on stages, virtually, only a raised platform at one end of the church hall and with no other exits than the steps leading down into the auditorium. All such production, however, is definitely limited in scope and always puts a heavy tax upon the players. Cramped back-stage space prevents scenery and large "props" for changes being kept as conveniently at hand as they should be, hampers the control of the lights, and makes the entrance and exit of the players more difficult. The minimum stage width for all practical purposes should not be less than thirty five feet. It is a generally recognized, though elastic, rule that the proscenium arch should measure but one half of the distance across the stage, and that the stage depth should equal the width of the proscenium.

In one large old-fashioned church in the East such a stage has been provided by ingenious alterations. The speakers' platform in the large basement assembly room formerly combined the characteristics of a rostrum and an old-fashioned "apron" stage. It has been extended to reach entirely across the width of the room, which is thirty six feet, and a proscenium arch twenty feet wide has been built. A small adjoining

room, used for church club meetings, is reached by steps leading from one side of the stage. This room is equipped with folding screens, and is used for a dressing room when between-the-act changes are necessary, the regular dressing rooms being too far away for this purpose.

Some progressive production groups with as much space at their disposal as this one has, may in time feel the need for a standard stage with fly loft, gridiron, stage switchboard and under-stage storage space. An architect with knowledge of theater construction may well be consulted in all such cases. An interesting discussion of the technical requirements of the standard stage will be found in Mr. Irving Pichel's book, *On Building a Theater* (Theater Arts Publishing Company, New York). When stage requirements are understood thoroughly, they can, in the average case, be met by local carpenters.

Wardrobe and dressing room space, and space for the storage of scenery, properties and lights are almost as necessary as adequate stage space. Many elaborately designed costumes have been spoiled for a second use by being crammed into small, dirty closets. Lighting equipment is eas-

A SCREEN BACKGROUND USED FOR THE LAST SUPPER SCENE

Hollywood Passion Play

ily lost or misplaced. Such space, fortunately, is seldom lacking in the modern church plant, where there are usually well equipped sewing rooms, and even a kitchen and serving room as well as large and small assembly rooms, all of which may be used by the theater workers without interfering with their normal functions. The sewing rooms will act as costume rooms. Often the women's groups by which they are used gladly become members of the costuming committee—sometimes they become the costume committee. Closet room, equipped with rows of bars and hangers, will best take care of costumes between performances. Shelves or drawers should be used for small, delicate "props", light bulbs and other breakable equipment. Storage space should, as nearly as possible be dust proof.

The church kitchen is a valuable asset to the workshop group as a laboratory where dyeing, scenery making and such work may be done. The long serving tables in one church kitchen were used as carpenter benches for the building of a set of "flats." Both coal stove and gas range had to be pressed into service at the last moment in drying the paint on these "flats" so that they would

be ready for the performance for which they were intended.

A matter almost as important as that of stage space in the larger auditorium is the "line of visibility." It matters not how superior a performance is being given if the audience cannot see it. Generally, the floor does not slope and cannot be made to slope since the room must serve as a center for church suppers, social nights and receptions. The elevation of the stage above the floor level may be so regulated as to make more seats good seats. Raising the stage above a certain height, however, tends to distort the proportions of the players. From three feet to three feet nine inches is good stage height, and over four feet is distinctly bad.

"Little" theater groups in various parts of the country have worked out interesting solutions to this problem. The Artist's Guild Theater, in St. Louis by which many worth-while art theater experiments have been tried, uses for its productions a room which is normally an art gallery. There, the problem was solved by the back half of the floor being built separate from the front half and hinged in the middle so that it can be

lifted by hydraulic jacks until the proper pitch is obtained. The chairs are then bolted to the sloping part of the floor. The community auditorium, in Hutchinson, Kansas, which also serves as a theater, has a similar arrangement installed at the time the building was erected. In Copley Hall, in Boston, movable risers have been used to elevate each row of seats six inches above the row in front of it, but this is an inconvenient, and not entirely safe arrangement and one by which fire hazards are greatly increased.

In the small assembly hall, the height of the proscenium arch may have to be less than any standard requirements because it is all but essential that there should be space above the sight line—as measured from any part of the house. The problems of lighting and the hanging of scenery are greatly complicated without such space.

THE HOMEMADE SETTINGS

From the point of view of the progressive amateur producer, "scenery" in the old sense, is a thing of the past. And, yet, only recently, a large, well organized, and at least socially sucess-

ful community dramatic group which had succeeded in clearing five hundred dollars on a season's productions, invested the entire sum in four second hand sets. These were of the most garish and "outlawed" type, and had been the property of a defunct stock company. Only a director retired from "stock" could have been guilty of such a "buy."

The setting formed of heavy, opaque curtains, hung in straight folds, is more in keeping with the ideals of not only "little" theater production but also of art theater production.

"Practically any play of the past," Mr. Clarence Stratton says in *Producing in Little Theatres*, may be set within curtained spaces, while not a few more modern ones—not demanding too finished realism can be thus set much more beautifully than by means of the usual old-fashioned interior flats. . . . Tapestries will set nearly all French plays, and many English ones. For any Moliere interior, you need merely cover your canvas walls with tapestries. A few hangings flanking a monumental fireplace, will carry you back to an indeterminate or a definite period

particularized by the furniture, the costumes and the dialogue of the characters."

St. John Hankin's *Constant Lover*, a present-day playlet realistic enough in its own fashion, was recently very interestingly set by Maurice Brown, who is well known for the distinctive character of his production work. The action takes place in a forest under a tree on a June afternoon. By a tacit agreement between audience and producer, a dull black velvet curtain arranged in suggestive folds becomes the boles of innumerable trees. Well down stage, a realistic tree covered with large white blossoms stands out in bold relief against this merely suggested background. This tree is the only property used except a piece of green silk thrown over an irregular object on the ground to form the "mossy hummock" on which the lovers sit. The whole effectiveness of the scene depends upon the lighting. The hour, three thirty, is emphasized in the play. Mid-afternoon sunlight, very yellow and very convincing strikes down slantwise upon the blooming tree and the players beneath it. The action is thus lighted and the forest background advantageously "shadowed."

"The Orient may be brought upon the stage," Mr. Stratton says, "by draping most of it in black and gold, then showing through tall straight openings, towers, peaks, domes and minarets against a brilliant blue backdrop, or against the purple of night." A bleached sheeting backdrop hung without folds, which served ordinarily, as a cinema screen, was recently used most effectively in a Western church auditorium as a setting for a large religious drama. Behind the screen, compot board cut-outs lighted from behind so that they were thrown up in relief above the players, represented the city of Jerusalem built on a hill.

In Boston, the large religious drama of the Christmas season: *When the Star Shone* was set for a night effect with stage draperies of royal purple sateen, against which a light-colored city wall was placed. The uninitiated watched in consternation, but a final lighting demonstration saw the purple recede and become, in effect, a far-away, mysterious sky of greenish blue. The whole present-day tendency in settings, in fact, is away from the crudely realistic, toward the suggestive. More often than not in the amateur

theater, neutral colored curtains are employed as a surface upon which softly diffused, vari-colored lights may fall.

"With a half dozen such opaque curtains, the artist can do the rest at almost no cost," says Mrs. Yorke Stevenson, of the Philadelphia Art Alliance, producer of the Hollywood Passion Play; "a single silhouette of rock or tree, a small screen and a piece of furniture, a half dozen steps, with accompanying change of light. A whole gamut of emotional and artistic effects can thus be wrought, leaving one breathless at their beauty and simplicity." Many experimental groups are carrying their program forward with one such curtain as a setting.

For the single curtain which is to serve as a setting for many productions, it is generally thought that a dull grayish blue or a violet gray is most desirable. Forest green forms a suitable background for many sorts of productions. It was used with interesting results by Madame Guilbert in some of her Medieval religious revivals where the scene was made to suggest a city square with the Cathedral dominating it, and residences ranged about it. Innumerable church

storage closets seem to yield plush or chenille draperies which lend themselves to use as stage settings. The dull red of most of these definitely limits their use. If they are to be used as a single setting, they may advantageously be dyed black.

Canton flannel, denim, rep and cotton poplin are good materials for the draped stage. Any of them may be bought inexpensively. Sometimes the stage may be effectively draped for a specific purpose by the use of layers of dyed cheesecloth, but material with more body is preferable. Plush, velour and velvet are very expensive, and are sometimes less desirable than canton flannel or dull finished sateen. It is doubtless the ideal of every new director to work on a stage hung with black velvet, but it is far from being the most appropriate background for general purposes. Miss Maud Adams, in recounting some of her lighting experiments, once told of efforts to achieve a certain effect. These efforts extended over weary days and nights. Every conceivable combination of lights was used. It was finally discovered that the failure to accomplish the desired atmospheric effect lay in the fact that the gleaming black velvet backdrop reflected instead

of absorbing light. In general, dull finished materials are preferable.

In recognition of the omnipresent demand for draped stages, one theatrical supply company of New York has perfected and is marketing a cleverly constructed portable stage of metal piping. The stage is self-contained and requires no stationary supports. The piping is made in sections of convenient size for packing and shipping. The back and side curtain frames are set on pivots in such a way that two complete sets may be hung at once and a change from one to the other may be made instantaneously. The side sections may be so manipulated as to form a square stage space or wing entrances. Such a stage could be placed upon the church basement platform. In fact, one non-commercial producer has already bought outright production rights to some plays generally recognized as having special appeal to church people. He is planning to use this portable draped stage on a "church basement circuit."

Almost as inexpensive, and equally as effective for certain amateur purposes are panel or screen sets. These may be used for all sorts of interiors. Light strips of lumber for framing, canvas or

compot board, paint, and the necessary hardware, —latches, bolts, hinges or whatever devices are employed for fastening the panels together, are practically the only items of expense involved outside of workmanship. Volunteers from manual training classes, and those from the adult membership of the church representing various callings and all walks in life have sucessfully joined forces in making such scenery, working under direction. Most often, however, it is considered expedient to have a carpenter make the frames since they are practically useless if they sag, or warp, or fail to fit together smoothly.

Screen sets are often made somewhat after the fashion of clothes horses, with double joints, with the panels not more than three feet wide. They should always extend above the sight line of the proscenium arch. The wider panels, of six or seven feet, have more practical purposes for realistic interiors. Extra pieces may be fitted with windows, arches, special doors and other architectural features. Excellent suggestions for making frame scenery for all sorts of interior settings and even for exteriors, are given in Mr. Roy

Mitchell's book *Shakespeare for Community Players.*

In this publication as well as in *Producing in Little Theaters*, by Mr. Clarence Stratton, numerous line cuts show methods of constructing frame scenery of various kinds, as well as its adaptation to various needs.

Screens and panels are often painted some light neutral color. Recent experiment by workers in the art theater has led, also, to the use of broken color decoration for such scenery. Some extremely daring and beautiful effects have been achieved in a few productions in this country during the past year or two, and the method has also been carried into the amateur theater with great success. Some amateur enthusiasts believe the broken color background to be the ideal setting against which lovely lighting effects may be achieved. Red, blue and yellow are frequently used. If these colors are selected in their right values, and applied evenly in some decorative way, the effect is very artistic. When a colored light is thrown upon the scene, it "picks up" the color of its own value, and tends to neutralize the

others. For the small stage, the most common method of using broken color is to apply it with firm small sponges, one color against another until the surface is covered. It may also be applied with a spray, but requires more expert handling.

LIGHTING

When light for light's sake was the established order, and light as an element for the creation of beauty and illusion was less known, "foots", "borders", and "strips" were the theatrical electricians' main stock in trade. They constituted the invariable "permanent fixtures" of the theater. With the newer theories of lighting, the imperfections and drawbacks of footlights were generally recognized. In many quarters they were abandoned entirely in favor of lighting from overhead and from the wings. Present-day opinion, however, favors the installation of "foots" whether they are always used or not. Some of the people who objected most violently to their use have restored them to their theaters.

The chief objection to footlights, of course, is that, without a careful balance of light from other sources, they throw unpleasant shadows upward

LIGHT MUST BE USED AS AN EMOTIONAL FACTOR
IN THE RELIGIOUS PLAY

on the faces of the players, and throw grotesque shadows of the players onto the back wall. In theory, at least, this effect was formerly destroyed by light coming from the "concert border" which was placed just inside the top of the proscenium arch, and by corresponding borders (on the large stage) spaced a few feet apart and extending to the back of the stage. Many modern producers consider that the greatest fault of the old time theater was that the play was literally drowned in a flood of white light. White light is no longer used except for special purposes. The best "little" theater work is done with the footlights of red, blue and amber, each color wired upon a separate circuit, so that they may be used all together for a general effect, or separately for special purposes.

Sometimes border lights are similarly treated. Oftener, the small stage does not have border lights as such, but is equipped with a border of gas piping upon which portable lamps may be fastened in sufficient numbers to light the play, from that quarter. One or two adjustable, portable lamps to be used from overhead, a pair of open box flood lights used from the wings, foot-

lights, and a spot light should furnish adequate equipment for the beginning group. The achievement of atmosphere in any scene depends upon the light, and is largely a matter of experiment. Gelatin mediums come in forty odd shades, either made up, or in sheets for which home made frames are easily devised. Knowing that amber is the daylight color, blue the twilight, and red the firelight, is not enough, and colors should not be used indiscriminately. Placing slide over slide,—a blue over an amber, or a frost over a blue,—for instance; or making a slide of half blue and half green; or using blue over some lights and green over others for night effects, often produces surprisingly effective "atmosphere." The whole lighting problem is one of distribution and diffusion; is one of experiment and more experiment.

There are several stage lighting companies which now supply equipment devised especially to meet the needs of amateur groups. This equipment is sold outright, or may be rented on a very reasonable basis if the transportation charges involved are not too great. Requirements for a particular stage or for a particular

play will be taken care of by experts. Among the concerns whose service includes the renting as well as the sale of such equipment, are The Universal Electric Stage Lighting Company, 321 Fiftieth Street, New York, and the Display Stage Lighting Company, 314 West Forty Fourth Street, New York. Catalogues will show various types of standard lights which are combination spot and flood lamps equipped with dimmers. With a pair of such lights, and a few portable lamps, a beautiful lighting effect might be worked out for the small stage. The whole tendency of the present day experimental theater is toward less and more beautiful light.

Much of the equipment used in church dramatic work thus far has been homemade. Footlights, either stationary or removable, have mostly been the work of amateurs working under the direction of an electrician. The most beautiful diffused lighting effects have been obtained from homemade flood lights, the lamps being set in tin dish pans or fastened into wooden boxes white enameled inside to form reflectors.

In the ideal, every unit of the stage lighting is equipped with a dimmer control, or a means

whereby all lights may be gradually lowered. Few beginning groups have a central control switchboard, but the most modest "little" theater organization should own at least two small dimmers, and more if possible. When the expense of purchasing these is out of the question, home-made dimmers may be devised for a particular performance, but they must be very carefully used. A salt-solution dimmer has been made as follows:

In the bottom of a five gallon jug, three quarters full of salt water, place an iron plate which connects by wire to the meter. Connected to the wire which leads to the switchboard is a quarter inch brass rod on the end of which is a pointed brass plate, three by four and a half by one eighth inch. This rod is placed in the jug of water. By drawing the rod slowly upward, the lights will be dimmed. Deepening dusk, fading sunlight, dying fire and such effects may thus be beautifully produced provided only the hand of the operator be steady and his power of attention well developed. It is extremely easy to burn out the lights if the attention wanders.

For miracle plays, especially, the spot light is

almost indispensable. Automobile shield lights may be successfully utilized indoors if connected with a storage battery, and will fulfill all of the purposes of a "baby" spot. They fasten to any convenient piece of side framing, and may be focussed to any angle. A bicycle lantern wrapped up in green tissue paper has been successfully used from the wings to throw dim moonlight upon a scene. Natural candle light was used in one case to illuminate the action of a modern miracle play in a peasant interior. Barn lanterns, kerosene lamps with tin reflectors, and torches have been used with great effectiveness in plays where no electric lights were available.

Mr. Alfred Arvold, director of the Little Theatre, of North Dakota, without peer in the field of rural drama, recently used an interesting lighting medium. He was asked by the University of West Virginia to go into a rural section and produce a demonstration pageant as the initial step toward local dramatic organization of the kind that has been so widely done in North Dakota. With proscenium arch and stage space cut out from the depth of a dense wilderness growth, with columns cut from giant trees, and

with the wildwood itself for scenery and background, it remained only to provide the lighting. For the soft diffused glow which was particularly wanted, pitch pine was spread evenly over flat slabs of shale and burned off-stage. Fancy the *Nativity* thus lighted! Fancy the *Resurrection* lighted by the simple new storage battery attachment which is available wherever an automobile is available! And think what rural communities may go and do, if only they will. In North Dakota, in North Carolina, and in some other states, assistance in doing these is being made available for religious as well as secular groups, as a part of educational extension programs.

CHAPTER V

THE PRODUCTION PLANT IN OPERATION

11. *Costumes and Properties*

SINCE costumes may be "borrowed, made, concocted, or combined" so readily, they are usually thought of as one of the simplest elements in production. A number of excellent books written especially for experimental dramatic groups enter fully into the matter of realistic and period costuming (see bibliography). Consequently, it seems preferable here to consider the special requirements of the Biblical play, the missionary and the religious pageant, and the ways in which these requirements are being met in church basement workshops. This will prove more helpful than a discussion of a subject already so well and thoroughly covered by recognized authorities.

Only rarely have costumes for religious and church basement drama been rented. The char-

acters in many of the most successful and beautiful Bible dramas, in fact,—whether in the church proper, in the church assembly hall, or out of doors,—have worn the simplest sort of home-made Oriental garments of muslin, cheesecloth, burlap, striped ticking or drapery materials. These, as may be seen in a number of the illustrations, showing notable productions, are usually made in one piece. A turban, a mantle—also made from a straight piece—a girdle and sandals, with the tunic or slip, fill the costume requirements for many Biblical and religious holiday plays.

Oriental tunics are commonly made from straight pieces of cloth twice the required length, folded in the middle, and with a T-shaped slit for the neck. This is seamed up the sides to a depth of several inches above the waist line, leaving the arms bare or partly covered according to the width of the material, and is bloused over a cord. Costumes for boys, girls and women are made thus. One hundred and six yards of unbleached muslin was used for such costumes in the preparation of an Easter play recently, being dyed into soft, clear, harmonious colors

COSTUMES FOR THE HOLLYWOOD PILGRIMAGE PLAY

They Were Largely Constructed from Draperies

and worn with long head veils, after Biblical tradition. These veils were also made of muslin or from old chiffon motor veils.

Shepherds and other traditionally humble Biblical characters commonly wear animal skins fastened to one shoulder and caught under the other arm, girt in at the loins and worn with a draped head cover falling to the shoulders. Or they may wear tunics made from burlap or other coarse material. The helmet and armour of Roman soldiers has been a big difficulty for some groups. It is best to rent helmets if they cannot be borrowed. One church school production satisfactorily solved the problem of armour by using men's short sleeved undershirts dyed steel grey thickly sewn over with small steel discs. This was worn over a knee length tunic. Burlap silvered with sapolin may also be used. Wise Men's robes may be enriched by the use of gilt fringe, bugle trimming, and single "jewels."

The complete wardrobe of rich Oriental costumes for the Wellesley production of the large pageant, *The Sinner Beloved*, including robes and mantles for prophets and humble folk, turbans, veils, gorgeous Assyrian headdresses, haloes and

angel wings,—was provided at a total cost of $19.50 for materials. The complete wardrobe for the *Nativity*, produced in the First Baptist church of Jersey City, cost the players exactly nothing at all! A New York woman who had just returned from the Orient, loaned a number of the costumes for important characters, and the others were donated by a woman's club of the church which bought the material and made them in the church sewing room. In Worcester, Massachusetts, a chest of costumes suitable for a large-scale, but single religious pageant, was made "at nominal cost" for the production already described,—*In the Days of the Judges*,—given at the Union Church. These costumes have been used numerous times since by various church groups for different plays, including the Easter Service: *I Am the Light of the World*, written by the same woman and presented in the Piedmont church.

The Pomfret community production of the *Nativity* is notably well costumed, practically without cost. Curtains from an old city home, table covers, silk scarves and other draperies are used as cloaks and turbans for the shepherds and

wise men. "After two or three years, just for convenience sake," the producer says, "we did make some simple cambric shirts,—brown, tan, dark blue, purple and green, to vary the color scheme a little. These were for the shepherds (five of them). Their purpose is to give a convenient and unyielding surface to pin their outer garments to. These we call skins of animals—actually they are curtains and draperies." The Heavenly Host wear simple, straight robes made of cheese cloth and girdled in at the waist. The Angel Gabriel's gown is very beautiful. It is made of unbleached cotton cloth in a single straight piece, with a mantle falling three or four feet behind. This gown is hand-painted by a very remarkable local artist, with a symbolic ecclesiastical design on the breast representing a pelican vulning herself for her young. The Virgin wears a simple white robe in the Annunciation scene, and a similar one dyed rose colored with a blue mantle and wimple (after Botticelli and other Old Masters) for the Manger scene.

The simple, homemade costumes worn by the Three Maries in the revived Medieval *Resurrection* referred to are shown in one of the illustra-

tions. Mary of Magdala, in one Easter play, wore a mantle of richly brocaded fabric, borrowed for the occasion and worn over a soft, loose under-dress. Soles from the Five and Ten Cent Store, bound on with tape, provide scandals for any costume. In Worcester, such soles were cut from an old asbestos table pad and bound with tape. Felt slippers, sometimes easier to walk naturally in, can be worn with many costumes, both men's and women's, since the feet do not show at all.

"In pageant production," Miss Nina Lamkin says, and it is notably true of religious pageantry whether produced indoors or outdoors, "symbolic characters should be thought of in their relation to the color in the historical scenes. Brilliant color, dashes of color among soft pastel shades, the blending or shading of color in one costume or one group, can be worked out so that the entire color scheme is historically good, symbolically beautiful and altogether satisfactory in the expression of the theme." A color print of the Frieze of the Prophets from the Boston Public Library is but one item of a mine of suggestive material for working out group effects with the

TURBAN WORN BY ONE OF THE MAGI

POMFRET "NATIVITY"

harmonious use of a wide variety of colors and shades, with the symbolism of the hopeful and the pessimistic prophets perfectly kept. A beautiful color scheme was successfully worked out in an Easter play last year, the red, purple and gold of ancient temple symbology being carried throughout the entire production in costumes, sets, and properties. All monotony was avoided by the interblending of an infinite number of shades of these colors, obtained by the use of dyes, paints, gilt stain and plain colored materials as well as a highly decorative sort of striped couch cover and some modern silk sports scarves.

Miracle and Morality plays are generally costumed after Medieval precedent. Books on costume design and the history of costumes available in almost any library will furnish adequate illustrations and color descriptions. Many acting editions of plays give detailed instructions and sketches for costumes. *Why the Chimes Rang*, comes with such instructions. It is one of the most widely produced of all Christmas plays: one which has been given recently by church and "little theater" groups all over the country, including those of Cleveland, Detroit, Iowa City,

Chicago, New York and Washington. The second scene of this play takes place in a Medieval church and offers great opportunity for a pageant-like effect, which may be made as elaborate as desired, as the richly garbed characters move up the aisles. Miss Constance D'Arcy MacKaye suggests as materials oilcloth heavily gilded or silvered with radiator stain (as Mr. Robert Esmond Jones has used it) pieces of old brocade of rich colors, old velvet, and lace curtains. In one of the most effective productions of this play, cheese cloth was used almost altogether for the women's costumes, which were dyed and stencilled. Hennins, or steeple hats, which women wore in that period, are easily made from buckram covered with veils of old silk or cheesecloth, draped and left floating. Boutet de Monvet's *Jeanne d'Arc* will afford adequate illustrations for such costumes.

It is only lately that missionary plays have received anything like the proper amount of attention to costuming. However suggestive or symbolic some religious plays may be, it is absurd to "improvise" the costumes of foreign peoples and offer them in all seriousness to cosmopolitan

audiences or congregations. A strong feeling is developing in many quarters that if we are going to show the peoples of other countries as they are to-day, we must at least take the trouble to find out something of their customary garb. A department store kimono will no longer serve as the costume of a Chinese or Japanese woman, to be completed by knitting needles or paper fans of diminutive size stuck in the hair. The Missions departments of some churches are attempting to provide long distance information in this important matter. The local group can provide itself with much data from library books.

There should be a costume committee, working always in close co-operation with the director, if not under his direction. This committee should include some local art teacher if possible, and several advanced art students whose services will be of constant value in producing decorative effects for properties as well as costumes. It should include members of church women's groups with a knowledge of sewing, and members of girl's club groups. Household arts students, and craftsworkers of many sorts are always a valuable addition.

A costume library should be started early, and should be so kept as to be a constantly increasing source of inspiration and aid. Whatever else it may contain for the uses of any particular church group, it should have, from the beginning, the complete Tissot set, in color or the *Wilde Bible Pictures*, which latter, are conveniently numbered and indexed for costuming purposes. Other standard trade-marked sets of reproductions from Old Masters are obtainable from almost any art print department. Good Christmas and Easter cards of certain sorts will prove a valuable addition. In fact, it was a particularly beautiful set of Christmas cards which inspired the initial production of what is now one of the country's outstanding annual religious dramas. The sketches which come with some acting plays, photographs and drawings of Bible plays as they have been put on in other places, and small costume models, all "belong." One church dramatic group found that the old Sunday School lesson charts (such as are published by the Sunday School Associations) afforded authentic guidance both in the matter of cut and coloring, for juvenile dramatization work.

COSTUMES WORN BY THE ROMAN SOLDIERS IN AN EASTER PLAY

If some special persons are appointed to do research work in art galleries, museums, and libraries, it will be found that the production will not only be more authentic historically but that it will be much more interesting and instructive to the student-producers. High school girls and young college students have done such work very successfully in different places. When they know just what things are needed, they can often obtain them by drawing on the attics and storerooms of the neighborhood. This is one of the ways in which a large costume wardrobe grows.

Dyeing in one of the chief activities of the costume committee. Old materials must often be renewed and their color restored. Light, new materials must be dipped to the desired shades, when bought white, as they should always be, for economical reasons. A half dozen tin pans, a color card, and an assortment of cold and hot water dyes complete the outfit with which every color requirement may be met. For tinting cheesecloth or muslin it is only necessary to dip it into cold water dye until the desired shade is acquired. Delicate shades thus dyed and placed one over another produce a beautiful effect for a

costume. For shading which will vary from an intense, deep color to the most delicate tint, one end of the material is dipped into hot dye, and the piece is held up in such a way that the color gradually soaks into the other parts. Tie-dyeing, so effective for scarves, mantle borders, and all sorts of decorative effects on tunics and gowns, is achieved by tying up the material with heavy cords into the desired design. When the material has been dyed and dried, the wrapped part remains the original shade. Circles, geometrical patterns of various sorts, flowers, and fruit may be achieved with a little practice, as may effective combinations of tie-dyeing and shading. Deep purple, for instance, may be used on a pale gray material with a deep tied-in-design around the bottom, and with the purple gradually shading until it is the faintest lavender, and comes then the natural gray. By dipping the patterned part into a lighter solution of dye a pretty two-tone effect may be achieved. Orange and yellow, pink and rose, and dark and light blue combine effectively and easily. Other color combinations in one piece require more care. A hit-or-miss effect may be achieved by dipping small areas of

the material into different colored dyes, being careful to wring each spot dry before dipping the area next to it and to wet approximately the same sized spot each time, until the material is entirely dyed.

Properties should be kept as simple as costumes for the average religious play. A city wall built of wooden framing and covered with canvas or fabricona and painted in broken color effects in shades of gray or light tan furnishes an impressive background for religious pageants when set against a blue backdrop or cyclorama. Such a wall may also be used as the chief "prop" in an outdoor Medieval scene. Pylons, steps, and columns are also most effective in the hands of experts who use them in the art theater for a wide variety of purposes.

An old packing box, covered with burlap and painted, provided an effective wayside well for one production of *Ruth and Naomi.* Concrete blocks, borrowed from a builder, were used in another. Little hills have been successfully made of canvas, painted. "A hill outside of Jerusalem," which figured prominently in one production, was made of compot board, painted. A

wooden runway of the exact slope of the hill was built behind it. Some of the players had to descend upon this. In some *Nativity* productions, the shepherds simply carry rude crooks, or pieces of wood, and lanterns. In others they bear gifts of fruit and bread,—the artificial fruit so widely used for centerpieces being easily found in department and specialty stores. The gifts of the Wise Men may be a borrowed jewelry cabinet, and an incense burner and "chalice of myrrh" which are part of the church property. Mary, searching for the Buried Lord, sometimes carries a box of ornamental design which may be made from a cigar box, covered with buckram and gilded and decorated in colors. The Manger is made simply from rough slabs, and is filled with straw in which an incandescent light is hidden to provide the "unearthly illumination."

For a maximum utilization of raw materials, human and otherwise, no production could exceed that of Miss Kimball's *Nativity* as it was produced in the First Baptist church in Jersey City. The entire cost of the play was less than five dollars. By carefully following sketches and dimensions found in an old Bible with an elabo-

MARY MAGDALENE BEARING THE PRECIOUS BOX TO THE TOMB

rately illustrated and exhaustive concordance, the properties were a triumph of historical accuracy.

The Annunciation scene was simple, being staged with somewhat of the Rosetti grouping, which required only a stand with a draped covering, a golden jar of lilies, and a scroll. The manger scene was equally uncomplicated. It was the temple scene which offered opportunity for ingenuity, and the careful transference of actual dimensions from the ancient concordance into usable properties. The Altar of Incense, "one cubit in length, one cubit in breadth, and two cubits in height, and made of pure gold," was devised from two shredded wheat cartons put together in correct proportion. Into the corners, near the top of the Altar, heavy wooden rings were fastened with invisible wires, and curtain-rods run through them. Then the whole was heavily gilded and surmounted by an incense burner and a dish, most convincingly created from old gas lamp shades found in the church storage closet. They were also heavily gilded. Egyptian incense was used.

The Table of Shew Bread (two cubits in length, one in breadth, and one and a half in

height) was edged all around with a "hand-breadth border" of ten cent store shelf paper with scolloped edges, used double so that one border turned up and the other down. Wooden curtain rings were fastened to the legs halfway down, and "staves" passed through them the long way (originally for convenience in carrying the table, as the Ark was carried). When finished, this was also heavily gilded. The shew bread was made (by a surprised local baker) in twelve loaves shaped to conform to a sketch. Each loaf had a hole in the middle. The whole was arranged in two piles on the table.

The candlestand was made from a box draped in royal purple and decorated with a motif taken from one of the church's stained glass windows. It was surmounted by a seven branch candlestick. When it was found impossible to borrow, rent or buy an ecclesiastical candlestick of the right dimensions, the minister made it! Materials for this, as for the entire outfit of properties, were found in the church closets. A twelve inch standard of wood, one and one half inches wide and an inch thick, was set into a grooved wooden base, oblong in shape, which was fastened platform-

wise on two "feet." Fastened to the sides of this upright with wire and bent into the proper curves, were six large, pliable wires, three on each side, over which were slipped sections of discarded gas tubing of the canvas-covered sort. Capping each of these arms and the central standard, were diminutive pill boxes into which the candles were fastened. (The boxes were the gift of a local druggist). The whole was gilded until it shone like gold.

Few religious productions have had properties worked out in such elaborate detail. Another New Jersey production of the same play, on the same night, was in interesting contrast to this as the properties were merely suggestive instead of being worked out in realistic detail.

Miss Elizabeth Irwin Miller's book, *The Dramatization of Bible Stories*, is a valuable hand book for the church dramatic group. The volume is largely a descriptive account of work done with a juvenile dramatic club of the Hyde Park Church of the Disciples, Chicago, but the methods used are exactly the methods of some sound producers of Bible drama for adults. The section devoted to the discussion of properties de-

scribes the making of all such accessories as helmets, trumpets, shields, scimetars, staves, and Hebraic horns, has valuable sketches of such properties, and pertinent comments on their proper uses in Biblical plays.

Angel wings and haloes are generally regarded as the most difficult accessories for the amateur producer or costumer to make. "Realistic ones are dreadful," one producer has said, "and the other sort are *imbecile*, unless you are an expert." The haloes in Dr. Shippen's *Spirit of Christianity* and those in *The Sinner Beloved* were convincing and beautiful. In both cases these were of cardboard the size of a large dinner plate, with a small circular hole, or crown, fitting on the head, and were gilded. They may or may not be stippled with color. Study of eccelesiastical art will reveal the angle at which the halo should be worn.

Wings should be carefully designed with a graceful flowing down-curve. They must be beautiful if they are used at all! Beautiful ones have been made from buckram wired into shape and covered with white crepe paper pinions in over-lapping layers, each layer delicately out-

lined with gilt. The wings must be fastened to a strong, tight-fitting waist worn under the robes. This waist should be reenforced in the back by a square of buckram or similarly firm material. What many people have declared to be the most beautiful wings ever made are those used in the *Pomfret Nativity*, elsewhere described. These are made of sheets of corrugated board, firmly stayed, and heavily gilded, with their pinions outlined in color,—scarlet, with the shadows crimson, violet and purple. But only the hand of a practiced artist is safe on such a creation, which, especially if the lighting were not perfect, would easily become garish and tawdry. Better angels without wings—yes, even without haloes; better no angels at all than those which will fail to move people by their simple beauty.

CHAPTER VI

THE CO-ORDINATED ARTS OF THE THEATER APPLIED TO PULPIT AND CHANCEL

PLAYS and pageants to be presented in the body of the church," says Miss Elizabeth Grimball, "while governed by the same laws of proportion in settings, of correctness in costuming, of harmony and contrast in colours, of sincerity in characterization and portrayal as drama presented elsewhere, nevertheless are also subject to certain limitations on the technical side." The first is that of the setting. Scenery, as we are apt to think of it, brought into the church, is unthinkable. In fact, the beauty and impressiveness of the ecclesiastical setting is a prime asset in church dramatic production. The present day tendency in church architecture, even in the non-liturgical churches is toward, rather than away from, a chancel, with its altar or communion table made the commanding point of

interest of the interior. The Gothic church has its reredos, with, perhaps, stained glass windows above it. In other styles of modern church architecture there may be a colored mosaic over-altar decoration, a mural painting, or a sculpture in bas-relief. Choir stalls, pulpit and lectern are beautifully carved with symbolic designs. Tapestries are used. All of these things set the stage: virtually *decide the form* of the church drama.

For the missionary play, the religious allegory, or the drama by nature devotional but without sacramental significance, the sanctuary has in some churches been veiled, the arras or curtain draperies thus used serving also the purpose of a background for the action, soft plain-colored hangings, or richly brocaded fabrics being used according to the nature of the play, and the light scheme. They should be selected, however, with a view to their harmony with the permanent church decorations.

The church with a central pulpit often has a pulpit platform sufficiently roomy for even large-scale pageant production. In some churches, alterations have had to be made because the pul-

pit was stationary (a point which, in view of the increased use of church drama as well as other forms of symbolic service, should be noted by church building committees and architects).

Never elsewhere to so great an extent does the meaning, the effectiveness, the beauty of any presentation depend upon pictorial elements. The setting enters, or should be made to enter, into the "creation of the picture," making religious drama in the apse of the church what it could not elsewhere be. The costumes and the properties, developed with due regard always to ecclesiastical symbology, should also emphasize the import of the action—reenforce it by psychological suggestion. And here, lighting is all-important.

The First Congregational Church, of Evanston, Illinois, is perhaps, the building in which the most extensive alterations have been made preparatory to the introduction of religious dramatic programs. These alterations provide an elaborate portable stage, which, when in place, is an extension of the upper pulpit platform. The gravest problem to be solved in introducing dramatic facilities was that of shutting out the light from the central dome as a preliminary step

ARRAS SETTING

Used on a Temporarily Extended Pulpit Platform

toward special lighting. It was finally solved by the erection of a tremendous proscenium arch. This arch was made by a huge curtain hung from a stout permanent cable which was bolted at either end through the brick walls of the church at the height of the organ top, some thirty feet from the floor. This upper curtain is eleven feet high and sixty feet long, extending across the entire front of the stage and wings, and hanging down just far enough to lap over the top of the wing and draw curtains. The stage, when in place, is supported by innumerable wooden trestles, three feet in height, and provides production space twenty five by fifteen feet with fairly commodious wings at each side. The entire platform extension is made in sections for convenience in handling and storing. Upright four by fours, fifteen feet high, fit into sockets set in the auditorium floor, forming the framing for the central stage room. Their tops are connected by beams. All hangings are of soft gray flannelette, and were made by the Ladies' Aid Society.

For the first production on this church stage, the inside stage walls were hung with dark red

draperies unearthed from some store-room. Later, however, some interested high school boys built a "set" of beaver board and brown-stained laths. Mrs. A. Starr Best, director of the church dramatic group, (The Pilgrim Players) is known nationally for the excellence of her work in the experimental theater. It is not likely, in her opinion, that many church groups will find as extensive remodeling necessary as in their case. But the expense, however great, was considered justifiable by everyone concerned, even after the first Christmas presentation: *Why the Chimes Rang.*

Nothing given during the year, it is said, was more effective in creating a religious atmosphere, and leaving audience and actors alike in reverent mood, than this little play in which Love alone is shown to be the perfect gift which may make the mystic chimes ring out at Christmas time. An evening program for adults filled the church, and an afternoon performance was given especially for the children of the town who were invited through the Sunday Schools and the local papers. Special reservations were made for the

boys and girls of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society.

In St. Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, New York City, a temporary stage extension has been added to the chancel on at least two occasions,—for the presentation of *Everyman*, and for the dramatic celebration of the *Feast of the Annunciation*. In St. George's, New York, *Eagerheart* was played in front of the chancel, with a simple curtain hung from wall to wall. In the Old Second Church, Boston, the *Nativity*, is not only acted out before the altar, but use is made of the symbolic objects of worship thereon.

The Jersey City First Baptist Church production of the *Nativity*, already rather fully described, was a triumph of staging. The pulpit platform is of average height and size. The pulpit is fastened to the flooring of the baptistry, the whole of which is removable,—rolling back through a movable section of paneling in the back wall. The pulpit was thus removed and the floor space cleared. The panel opening in the back wall of the platform was left, and two large doors, one to the right and one to the left

of it, were fastened open. A four foot hall, visible through these apertures (which were quite large in proportion to the platform space) had its visible wall entirely covered with heavy plush curtains. A good part of the action, notably the manger scene, was set well back within the central space, thus achieving beautiful lighting effects which are all but impossible on a simple platform extension. Mr. Hainer, the minister, with the aid of some boys, made two flood light boxes, which, used from the ends of the hall "off stage," bathed the scenes in constant beauty. They were made of wooden boxes, white enamelled inside, set on standards made of strips of wood about 5′ 6″. The wire was carried through a hole at the top of the box. High power incandescents were used. Home-made tissue paper "slides" of various colors were held in place, when in use, by curtain screws of the kind that have a right angle extension top. The boxes were so fastened on the standards that they could be adjusted to throw the light on the players from any angle or at any part of the platform.

Anything like beauty of lighting is difficult to achieve on a simple projecting platform. The

exclusive use of footlights all but spoiled a beautiful Biblical drama recently presented in a Baptist church,—their white light (which is good only in very exceptional cases) casting gigantic shadows of the players against a white back wall where they moved grotesquely with every motion of the players. Sockets screwed into the base of the front row of pews were used with better effect in a New England church, where they were used in conjunction with an overhead light. At least two churches with balconies have made use of flood lights from the back of the house and have found that, when they are properly managed, they are very effective. If the platform is large enough, flood lights may be placed behind some sort of properties used at the sides.

There are a number of beautiful church plays which are available now, giving full details as to costuming and lighting as well as narrative and incidental music. Thus the ingenuity of the local group is taxed only in the adaptation of the piece to their particular chancel or platform limitations. The suggestions given by Miss Dorothy E. Weller, Technical Director of the dramatic work done at St. John's Cathedral, Den-

ver, for the production of *Darkness and Dawn* in the chancel, illustrate the possibilities of long distance guidance even in technical matters. They are as follows:

Episode I.

Altar hangings as for Good Friday. The Altar should be bare of furnishings, and a thin black veil should cover the Altar Cross. Children of the Church School follow the choir down the central aisle of the church, and occupy the front pews. As the two choristers stand on the steps leading from the nave to the choir and sing "There is a Green Hill Far Away," the lights in the nave are gradually extinguished.

Lighting of the Chancel Where Action Takes Place.

If possible, have an overhead light of blue for all three episodes, as this overhead light does away with the shadows of the actors. Place a flood light well toward the front, on each side of the chancel. Try to direct the light from side to side so that the altar will remain in the

shadow. The left front flood light is green at first. Place blue over it just before Spirit of Marigold appears. Right front flood, blue. Use a small spot light on the face of Marigold.

At the close of Episode I, when the children kneel to repeat the Lord's Prayer, the choir and congregation should kneel also and join in prayer with the children, remaining on their knees while the Children's Choir sings the "Children's Litany." This gives the people in the pageant opportunity to leave the chancel quietly. The congregation resume their seats during the singing of the solo *The Fourth Word*, from Dubois.

Episode II.

Altar the same as in Episode I. Left flood, green and dark blue. Right flood, several layers of dark blue. Just before the Roman Soldier says, "See, the dawn is breaking," slip off a layer of dark blue from the flood light that stands on the east side of the chancel.

Episode III.

During the solo, "Messiah Victorious," two

young girls in flowing white robes appear and silently and swiftly remove the black veil from the altar cross, and the black hangings from behind the altar. Two others, similarly dressed, bring altar vases filled with Easter lilies. Easter hangings back of the altar, if they are to be used, should be in place, and covered with some light weight black material so that it is but the work of a moment for the "angels" to remove it. Then they kneel quietly on either side of the altar during Episode III, until time for the people in the pageant to form the recessional, following the choir when they fall in behind them.

The left flood starts with blue and green as in Episode II; blue is gradually withdrawn, amber is added, then green is withdrawn. The left flood starts with blue with amber top, the blue is withdrawn, and a second amber added. When the cast leaves the chancel, turn the amber floodlights on the altar, so that it is a blaze of light. If possible, have an amber spot light flood the procession as it passes down the central aisle singing "Alleluia!" The rector in full vestments might stand before the altar and pronounce the benediction after the children have passed out

THE CHANCEL OF THE SECOND UNITARIAN CHURCH, BOSTON

It Has a Beautiful Mosaic Over-altar Decoration which is Used as a Background for the Christmas Pageant

of the nave and before the nave lights are restored.

"The terrifying darkness of noonday" the black night of the entombment, and the gradual dawn of the Resurrection morning are convincingly portrayed chiefly by the use of home-made floodlights made of sixteen dishpans, into the bottom of which five or six electric sockets have been fastened. Miss Weller describes the making of these lights as follows: "Mount the pans on sections of gas piping so that they may be raised and lowered at will. The handles of the dishpan may be bent to hold the wooden frames that are made to carry the gelatin slides. Have holes placed in each pan just back of the handles, so that the reflectors will be well ventilated, as heat destroys the slides. The frames of our gelatin slides were made of yard sticks, with a half dozen strands of fine wire stretched across them to keep the gelatin smooth."

With this play, as with numerous others now available, full directions are given for making costumes (a subject dealt with in the foregoing chapter). For its production on a pulpit platform instead of in a chancel, the instructions for

staging in the church hall which come with the play will be found adequate. A line drawing shows the placing of properties.

When the Drama League of America some time ago decided that it would be a good thing if every center in the country held a religious dramatic celebration at Christmas time, they appointed a committee to suggest some one play for such production. This committee of experts included Mrs. Otis Skinner, Mr. Frederick Koch, and Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton. The play decided upon was Miss Elizabeth McFadden's *Why the Chimes Rang*, mentioned in the foregoing chapter.

This particular play was chosen because it is effective yet simple, and because the size of the cast and the elaborateness of the production may be varied to meet local necessities. It is also a play which may very appropriately be presented by any church or may be provided as a community undertaking,—each church being responsible for a separate unit. Mr. Eaton, at that time, made the following suggestions for staging the play in a church,—suggestions which have been widely and successfully followed:

"I should say that wherever possible the play

should be produced in a church, and necessarily an Episcopal church, or at least one built with an apse and an altar.* This adds fifty per cent to the atmosphere of the play with real church bells to peal out for the climax; it also provides an organ, a chance for distant chanting, and real processionals.

"If the play is given in a church, I suggest the utmost simplicity of setting for the cabin,—just a property fireplace, a kettle of stew, a wooden bench, and a chair, and a screen with a window set in it to serve as a back wall. This could be built up on a little platform down from one side so that it could be seen by all. The chancel should be kept dark or as dim as possible, and a spotlight thrown on the cabin. For the vision, remove the spotlight, light the chancel, start the processional up the aisle on the farther side, and while the eyes of all are thus diverted, slip the screen back wall down behind the platform if desired. I do not believe that gauze or other curtains to screen the chancel are at all necessary. In fact, if the church is electrically lighted and

* The drama has since been widely staged in other types of churches. See account of its production in the First Congregational Church, Evanston, Illinois, on a removable stage.

controlled, I think the play will be far more imaginative and effective without them. One object is to show how much can be done without scenery and other artificial paraphernalia. Under these circumstances, it might be well to end the play with the chimes, not showing the boy again in the cabin as if it were a dream, but letting him march out with the rest, wonderingly, at the head of the procession.

"Increase the pageantry. Have the people bearing gifts come in from the rear of the church in procession, or in two or three processions. Have not only the King, but his court. For the music, have all the voices possible. Keep, at the end, the whole church full of song and music from every available spot; only, as each gift is placed on the altar, there must be dead silence. This should be impressed on producers; also that the bell ringing must come promptly on the cues."

Why the Chimes Rang is intrinsically a church play whether or not the altar be veiled. As to just what other plays may advisedly be brought into the church proper there are many opinions; it is a subject which the local group itself must decide. The decision will differ as the church is

ritualistic or non-ritualistic in its worship. There is a widespread feeling in Episcopal churches, and in many Congregational and even Unitarian churches that, strictly, church drama should always have liturgical significance,—should always be of the essence of church worship. We cannot but believe that the great potentialities of drama as a new religious-art form lie along this line when once we realize that the tendencies of the times in religious thought and feeling—and religious needs—indicate that Protestant churches of the future will make their strongest appeal to the æsthetic side of man,—through the use of enriched and ennobled ritual. Now and again one sees a play enacted before a curtained-off chancel —a play not perfectly suited to church production—grows painfully aware that the settings are makeshifts, and concludes that it might better have been given in an auditorium, had an auditorium been available.

CHAPTER VII

TOWARD NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

WHEN Boston University, in 1918, established a Department of Fine Art in Religious Education, it voiced the profound conviction (which is fast becoming the conviction also of all of the most progressive churches of the country) that "the church must again become the mother of artists and the generous patron of the arts." As a practical expression of its conviction, setting about the creation of proper leadership in so important a field, it assembled a permanent faculty and outlined a practical program through which all of the literary, artistic and musical facilities of Greater Boston could be made to serve to the utmost advantage the interests of all students in religious education and social service.

Special courses introduced into the curriculum included not only Music, Poetry, and Art, but added Drama and Pageantry to the studies pur-

sued in the service of the church and community. Not only is the theory of religious dramatic production considered, but the practical problems involved also received due attention. The organizing, directing, casting and coaching of plays and pageants are included in regular class work.

This means that large numbers of graduates going out every year to assume some of the fast-multiplying positions of Christian leadership, are armed with a knowledge of all of the essentials of dramatic leadership. The effect that even this one pioneering institution will have upon the religious dramatic field may best be appreciated by a glance at the kind of openings which are every year being filled by graduates. These graduates become: directors of religious education in local parishes; directors and instructors in the week-day schools of religious education which are being widely organized; religious directors for communities; religious directors for settlements and Christian Associations; educational superintendents for denominational boards; home and foreign missions educators and executives; special directors for community institutes of religious

education, conventions, and schools of method in religious teaching.

Few among the laity realize the revolution which has taken place in religious educational standards and ideals during recent years. Churches are more and more acting together in assuming community leadership in social as well as spiritual affairs. Religious leadership has become a profession. Schools of religious education are being established by universities the country over. These may be counted as one of the influences through which we may expect such a return to the æsthetics of religion as Boston University foresaw when it introduced the pioneer department described.

It is coming to be generally recognized that the first practical step toward the church becoming the center of the art life of a Christian people, is in the proper use of the drama as an art form in the religious service. Almost every Protestant denomination has long realized the spiritual as well as the educational value of religious pageantry as they have used it in the various departments of their work.

Both the Methodist Episcopal Church and the

Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States have to-day special departments through which they have begun to give training in leadership in religious drama and pageantry. These activities have developed in both instances, through such bureaux of information and service regarding pageant production as almost all Protestant denominations maintain in connection with missionary education activities.

The special department of the Methodist church, officially the Pageants and Exhibits Division of the Committee on Conservation and Advance, with headquarters in Chicago, has the recently adopted policy of "bringing a knowledge of educational dramatic method to students of religious education and workers of the church." This is done by the presentation of short courses in colleges, training schools, and universities, and in many other ways. One of the most prominent of these methods is the presentation of courses in existing summer schools such as those conducted by the Boards of Sunday Schools, and by the Boards of Home Missions for rural pastors. Such courses are also on the curricula of Institutes such as those conducted by the Epworth League,

and are given at Conferences such as those held under the auspices of the Missionary Education Movement.

Courses in Religious Educational Drama were given by Miss Helen L. Willcox, Director of the Pageants and Exhibits Division, during the school year of 1921–1922 in the University of Southern California, the College of the Pacific, the San Francisco Training School, Wiley College, the Dakota Wesleyan University, the State University of Wisconsin, and a special course given in connection with the Chicago Recreational Training School. Summer courses for the year included a short-term school under the Board of Sunday Schools, at Evanston, Illinois; a conference for pastors under the board of home missions and church extension work; and a Missionary Education Movement school.

It is the intention of the Pageants and Exhibits Division to establish a regular summer school for teachers, religious educational directors and students with the proper qualifications. These students will be sent by their own church Areas, or districts, and upon graduation from the intensive laboratory course, will become directors

of local branches of the Pageants and Exhibits Division. They will discover and develop the capacities for leadership in others, and will supervise local productions under the general direction of the national headquarters.

The activities of the Council on Church Drama and Pageantry under the General Board of Religious Education of the Protestant Episcopal Church, with headquarters in New York City, differ somewhat from those of the Methodist organization, although there is close and friendly co-operation between the two agencies, as there is, indeed, among all the agencies which are working toward an American religious drama. The drama was first adopted as a vehicle for the religious teachings of the Episcopal church in 1905 when a mystery play for church presentation was prepared and enacted by a catechism class of St. Agnes' Chapel, New York. This was the beginning of a distinct movement, which, by 1911, had assumed such proportions that a special department under the Board of Home Missions, was created to direct, control and further it. Meanwhile, the other Protestant churches of the country were recognizing the value of religious page-

antry and to a greater or less extent furthering its use in missionary and Sunday School educational work. It was in 1919, when the Protestant churches of the country gathered their forces to meet effectively the demands of the readjustment period, that the present council was formed.

It is, perhaps, natural that the Episcopal church, with its more formal service and its greater observance of the spirit of sacramentalism, should approach religious dramatic production in an attitude somewhat different from that of other denominations, and more akin to the devoutly worshipful attitude in which the early liturgical drama was conceived. The experimental stages in Episcopal church basements and parish halls, where they exist, are often used for the production of secular plays and entertainments just as are those of other denominations. But there is an element of religious devotion which extends itself even to the *preparation* of the sacred drama, which are to a great extent, though not entirely, presented upon church holidays.

The first step of the Episcopal Council toward the development of national leadership was taken in the summer of 1921 when the first school of

church drama and pageantry was held at Wellesley College in connection with the annual district conference of church workers. The school was conducted by Mr. Phillips E. Osgood, who is chairman of the Council, and Miss Elizabeth B. Grimball. The crypt of Wellesley chapel was used as a workshop where the costumes and properties were created for the production of the demonstration pageant,—*The Sinner Beloved* which was written by Mr. Osgood and produced in the outdoor theater of the college.

Similar courses will be introduced into other district conferences. At the general conference of the Episcopal churches of America, when it meets in Portland, Oregon, in the autumn of 1922, a course in workshop drama for church workers, similar to those which have been given at Wellesley, will be held by Mr. Osgood and Miss Grimball with a country-wide representation of students.

Protestant churches, other than those named, have not definitely undertaken to create leadership in this field. Dr. Harold McA. Robinson, of the Board of Publications and Sabbath School Work of the Presbyterian church, with headquar-

ters in Philadelphia, states the case of the Presbyterian church as follows:

"There is a very widespread use of pageantry, particularly when missionary in character, among our churches. Our Board has also published a number of pageants of more general character, both in connection with our programs for special days and for general use, which have met with wide acceptance. Our educational staff offices are continually receiving requests for available material which show a growing interest in the subject. We have listed possible material for amateur use, strictly religious in character, and most of it easy to produce. Our list is based upon the lists published by the Missions Board of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., by the Abingdon Press [prepared under the supervision of the Pageant and Exhibits Division of the Methodist Church] and by the Commission on Religious Drama and Pageantry of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

"Our staff has not been able to investigate the possibilities lying in the use of pageantry and religious drama as thoroughly as we desire, because we lack the funds. It ought to be said,

however, that, particularly in our Vacation Bible School program and also in connection with our program of Week-Day Religious Instruction, there is provision for the dramatization of Bible stories. We do feel that our program of religious education, in all its aspects, must make increasing use of religious drama in this sense."

This is typical of the attitude of other Protestant denominations. The Baptist Board of Missionary Education, under the General Board of Education, New York City, reports that it has difficulty in keeping a supply of pageantry material sufficient to meet holiday and special service demands.

The attitude of the state Sunday School Associations is similar to that of the churches,—favorable to the wider utilization of religious drama and pageantry as fast as that is possible. In at least one state, New Jersey, short training courses in dramatic method are given, both by the Methodist Board of Sunday Schools of the state and by the New Jersey Sunday School Association (inter-denominational). These courses are given principally by Miss Elisabeth Edland, director of the dramatic department of the Sun-

day School publications of the Methodist church. Miss Edland also teaches a similar class in connection with the Community Training School for Sunday School workers which is now maintained in connection with the religious extension work done at Columbia University.

At the International Sunday School Convention, held in Kansas City, Missouri, in June, 1922, two evenings were devoted to the presentation of religious pageants, prepared under the direction of Professor H. Augustine Smith, director of the Department of Fine Arts in Religion, Boston University. These pageants were produced with the idea that the delegates (more than 8,000 in number, representing 1,677,695 Sunday School officers and teachers, and 12,036,246 pupils from all parts of the United States and Canada) should carry back home with them the correct feeling for the coordination of music, light and color in the dramatized religious appeal.

The first of these pageants, *The Light of the World* was participated in by three hundred players besides a pageant chorus of one hundred singers. The other, *The Commonwealth of*

A PART OF ONE OF THE VAST CROWDS

That Witnessed the International Sunday School Convention Pageants Given in Kansas City

God, had an even larger cast. Convention Hall, which has a seating capacity of 12,000 was taxed to capacity. Not an inch of standing room remained, and hundreds of people had to be turned away. The pageant depicted America as the "Commonwealth of God," and its children as the children of God. "No Christian American citizen could see the strongly stirring series of scenes," a spectator afterwards wrote, "without feeling that he was looking into the mirror of his own mind seeing there the ideal America as he knows it."

The first secular organization to recognize the social and spiritual value of church drama, and to take active part in the development of leadership, was Community Service, Incorporated. When the discovery was made that over thirty five per cent. of all the students enrolled for the Community Service Drama Institutes of Greater Boston, were church workers, Mr. Joseph Lee, the president of this national organization and a resident of Boston, conceived the idea of holding six weeks' drama institutes exclusively for church workers of all creeds and sects. Such an institute was held in Boston in November–December,

1921, with Mr. Percy Jewett Burrell as organizing director, and Miss Joy Higgins, director of the Boston Community Service Dramatic Department, as technical director. Professor George Pierce Baker, of the Dramatic Department of Harvard, and of "47 Workshop" fame, was the chairman of the school dramatic committee.

The institute combined the lecture and laboratory methods. The faculty was composed of brilliant assemblage representative of the highest religious and artistic ideals of New England. Among the special lectures prominent in the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths, were the Reverend Michael J. Scanlon, Director of Charities, Arch-Diocese of Boston (Catholic); Dr. Walter S. Athearn, Director of the Boston University School of Religious Education and Social Service; Rabbi Harry Levi, Temple Israel, Boston; Miss Katherine Searle, playwright; Rev. William E. Murphy, Director of Dramatics and Professor of Classics, Boston College; Mr. Thomas Whitney Surrette, Director of Musical Art, Cleveland Art Museum; Miss Lotta Clark, secretary, American Pageantry Association; Pro-

fessor H. Augustine Smith, head of the department of Art in Religious Education, Boston University; and the Rev. Herbert Wright Gates, Missionary Education Secretary, Congregational Educational Society.

The workshop staff, under Miss Higgins' direction, included such authorities on "little" theater technique as Mr. Daniel O. Brewster, of the Boston Normal Art School who supervised the stagecraft; Mr. Stanley Russell McCandless, of the Harvard Architectural School, who supervised lighting; and Mrs. Edith Coburn Noyes, head of the Noyes School of Expression, voice culture. Miss Esther Willard Bates, of the Department of Art in Religious Education, Boston University, directed study in pageantry writing. Mrs. Margaret Shipman Jamison, recognized authority on Biblical literature and history, and member of the Educational Extension Division of the State of Massachusetts demonstrated Scriptural Dramatization.

Lady Gregory's *Traveling Man*, a modern religious miracle play, and *When the Star Shone*, a Christmas pageant written by Rev. Lyman R.

Bayard, were cast, staged, rehearsed and costumed as class work and given public production at the end of the school term.

One of the outstanding results of the school, in addition to the leadership created, was the informal, interdenominational organization, which, it was planned, would continue to meet for round table discussions bearing upon the subject of church drama. A plan has begun to develop in the minds of some of these people for the organization of a great annual religious festival which would be, at once, the expression of the artistic and religious activities of Greater Boston.

A similar dramatic school for religious workers was established in New York city about the same time, under the direction of Mrs. May Pashley Harris, of the Community Service Dramatic Department. The staff included Mr. Percy Jewett Burrell; Miss Helen Arthur, Associate Director of the Neighborhood Playhouse, New York City; Miss Marjorie Lacey Baker, Dramatic Reader and Director; Rev. Phillips E. Osgood; Miss Helen L. Willcox; Miss Anita B. Ferris, author and producer of religious pagents; and Miss Elizabeth Edland.

The workshop course, similar to that in Boston, included training in stagecraft and play directing as applied to the proper production of the miracle play, the one act play of spiritual import, the Bible-story and the pageant. Among the technical experts who assisted in the school were: *In stagecraft:* Woodman Thompson, Professsor of stagecraft, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburg; Mr. Carl Glick, director of the Community Theater, Waterloo, Iowa. *In costuming:* Mr. Charles Pellow, president New York Society of Craftsmen. *Drama for Children:* Miss Anna Cogswell Tyler, Children's Department, New York Public Library; Mrs. Mabel F. Hobbs, Community Service Bureau of Educational Dramatics. *Pageantry*: Professor Bird Larsen, Barnard College; Miss Emma Mueden, Dramatic Director, School for Ethical Culture; Miss Elizabeth Grimball.

Eight *nativity* plays are reported to have been undertaken by students finishing the course, as well as four other plays of religious nature, of which two were produced in Jewish Free Synagogues. Two "little" theater workshops in religious centers have resulted.

The Community Service idea has been to bring together outstanding authorities, not only on drama within the church, but also on amateur production, for the benefit of church workers of all denominations. Conforming to definitely felt local demands, subsequent Community Service drama institutes have been broadened to include especial training for church groups. This has been done in Ohio, in Kansas and in New Jersey, and has resulted, in at least one instance, in an active Community Religious Drama Committee and an annual Sunday afternoon dramatic program.

Not only the Community Service but the national Drama League, has found the heartiest and most unselfish co-operation on the part of the artistic spirits of the communities wherever these have been asked for the services. And, moreover, it has been found that those who have devoted their lives to the creation of beauty—as all artists in every sense have—welcome the opportunity to lend a guiding hand in what, to many of them, has been a significant first step toward the creation of something approaching an Art of the People.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Several years ago, the Drama League of America adopted a definite policy of church co-operation. It maintains, through the Drama Magazine and through its local offices, a Religious Drama service department, under the direction of Miss Clara Fitch, and with the advisory service of such men as Mr. Charles Rann Kennedy and Mr. Walter Prichard Eaton. Feeling that the lack of artistic material was one of the greatest handicaps to the development of church drama, the League held a religious play contest, for which three prizes were offered. As a result of the contest, ten admirable religious plays have been made available for production without royalty.

As long ago as 1919, a Biblical play was introduced for demonstration purposes in connection with the national Drama League Convention, in Chicago. *The Child Moses*, as presented by the Pilgrim Players, of the Evanston Congregational Church, was a well-chosen Biblical play, carefully developed with regard to the laws of "little" theater production. The costuming, including elaborate Egyptian and Hebrew effects, was the triumphant result of work done by the girls of a

local Church School, under the guidance of a notable artist. Even the laborious research work necessary for making costumes that would be historically accurate, and which involved numerous pilgrimages to public library and art institute, was done by girls of high-school age.

According to a recent announcement made by the Drama League, there is a movement on foot for the formation of an Inter-Denominational Committee on Religious Drama, in which the Drama League will actively co-operate, and which, it is expected, will hasten the standardization of the character of church productions.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EARLIEST DEVELOPMENT OF A CHRISTIAN DRAMA

. . . To worship for a season, in the manner and spirit of our ancestors, were infinitely more pleasing than the pride of controversy or the pursuit of scientific ends.
—Charles M. Gayley.

HABIT and custom revolve in circles, someone has said, and pass the same place again and again. The present day tendency toward the dramatized version of the Bible story and lesson finds honorable precedent in the very earliest years of Christian history. There are records of scholarly dramatizations from the Prophets during the first and second centuries. Appolinarius, priest of Laodicea, recast large sections of the Old Testament into dramatic form in the Fourth Century, and, somewhat later, his son, Bishop Appolinarius, similarly re-wrote parts of the New Testament. Romanus, the musician and poet, is worthy also of

being called one of the first ecclesiastical dramatists of Byzantine. His dramatized narrative of the birth of Christ antedates by five centuries, the *Mystery* of the Western World. This poem-drama contains an account of the Nativity and its accompanying wonders, and then a dialogue between the Wise Men and Joseph and Mary. "The Magi arrive, are admitted, describe the moral and religious conditions of the East and of Persia, and the cause and adventures of their journey, and then offer their gifts. The virgin intercedes with her son for them, instructs them in some Old Testament history, and ends with a prayer for the salvation of the world." (Tunison)

It was, perhaps, more than a hundred years later that Ignatius, deacon of St. Sophia, contemporary of John of Damascus and Stephen Sabaites (both also authors of religious drama), wrote a dramatized version of Man's First Transgression, introducing the characters of Adam and Eve, the Serpent, and God. It is not certain that these works were ever produced in churches. The two latter, however, and many more of a similiar nature, were portentious of the great drama of the Christian religion, which, it is generally

agreed, was germane to the Christian faith and in no wise associated with, or a descendant of the then decadent classic drama. Indeed, the growing impulse was beginning to make itself felt in the most intense moments of worship, even while the church itself most bitterly fought the theater of the late Roman empire, with all of its degeneracies and low forms of appeal.

"But it was not," says Gayley, "until the church of the Dark Ages had begun to emphasize in its religious functions *the dramatic element lying at the core of its ritual and its faith*, and to realize that the latter could best be inculcated by the staging of the former,—the faith emphasized by staging the ritual,—it was not until then that modern drama was born." The religious drama was to find its most perfect expression in the Passion Play of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. It was to be one of the most potent forces of Medieval civilization—and of modern civilization. The Elizabethan stage and our stage to-day were to be its direct lineal descendants. That drama, however, was not to emanate directly from the pens of these early scholars, however much they were destined to shape its

later form and course. Rather, as is well known, it evolved through the religious service itself.

That this evolution began early is evidenced by Chrysostem of Antioch, one of the early church fathers, who, in the Fourth Century, preaching on the Eucharist, said:

> If we come in faith, we shall see Him lying in the manger, *for this table represents the arrangement of the manger.* Here will lie the body of the Master, not now in swaddling clothes, as then, but clothed in the Holy Spirit. The initiated will know what I mean.

At least from the Fourth Century on, the central and most sacred rite of the service (in a language for the most part little understood by the common people) was "the mystical liturgy of the Mass, with its blending of symbolic action, Scriptural narrative, and outburst of song," with "definite progression, with pantomine and epical and lyrical elements." It is certain that as early as the fifth century, living tableaux were introduced as an embellishment of the liturgy on special church holidays such as Easter, Christmas, Ascension Day and Whitsuntide. It is certain also that the figures of the Prophets sometimes appeared and delivered the Old Testament lesson

of the day. It is certain that the antiphon, introduced into the church services at a very early date (as a following out, some authorities believe of ancient Hebrew tradition), took on more and more the effect of dialogue between the divisions of the choir, or between clergy and choir.

No one knows when all of these dramatic elements were fused and began to crystallize into a definite liturgical drama and be given a separate place in the service. Before the end of the Ninth Century in Germany and France, however, and certainly as early as the Tenth in England. And if there is no exact historical evidence as to the time, there is evidence as to the exact manner of this development. The antiphonal singing with its latent effect of question and answer, was gradually developed into tropes, or texts appropriate to the occasion on which the Mass was sung. When to the singing, appropriate action was added, and priests, choristers and altar boys assumed the characters represented, the liturgical drama was a complete entity and followed, instead of merely embellishing the musical portions of the service.

The first complete and certainly the most im-

portant liturgical drama of which we have record, is the *Quem Quaeritis* (Whom Seekest Thou?) of Easter Day. For over three hundred years, and in spite of the variety of changes which were going on in the main stream of dramatic evolution, it held a practically unchanged place in the services except as it became more and more the central theme for a series of Easter liturgical dramas. In the famous *Concordia Regularis* (a partial translation of which appears in the introduction to *Everyman and Other Early Plays*, and the full text of which [in Latin] appears in the appendix of Chambers Medieval Stage), the ritual is given in detail as it was prescribed for use in Winchester, in 930, together with the Good Friday service of the Adoration of the Cross and the Creeping to the Cross.

Because it affords so interesting a prototype of the Resurrection services as we see them in some of the churches of to-day, and of the familiar Resurrection episode of the cyclic *miracles* from which many present-day plays are being derived, it is of particular value to the student of religious history and religious drama. It reads:

During the Third Nocturne of Matins, let four brothers vest themselves, one of whom, vested in an alb, enters as if to do something, and in an inconspicuous way approaches the place where the sepulchre is, and there, holding a palm in his hand, sits quiet. While the third *respond* is chanted let the three others approach, all alike vested in copes, bearing thuribles with incense in their hands; and with hesitating steps and in the manner of people seeking something, let them come before the place of the sepulchre. These things are done, indeed, in representation of the angel sitting within the tomb and the women who came with spices to anoint the body of Jesus. When, therefore, he who is seated sees the three approaching, as if wandering about seeking something, let him begin in a dulcet voice of medium pitch to sing:

"Whom seek ye in the tomb, O Lovers of Christ?"

When this has been sung to the end, let the three respond in unison:

"Jesus of Nazareth, Him Who was Crucified, O Heavenly Being!"

Then he:

"He is not here. He is risen, as He hath prophesied. Go announce that He is risen!"

Upon the utterance of this announcement, the three turn to the choir, and say:

"Alleluia, the Lord is Risen!"

This said, let him, still remaining seated, call the three back, with the antiphon:

"Come and see the place where the Lord was laid. Alleluia!"

Having said this, let him rise and lift the veil and show them the place empty of the cross, but the cloths only laid there with which the body was wrapped.

When they see this, let them set down the thuribles that they have carried, within that same sepulchre, and take up the cloth and hold it up before the clergy as if in testimony that the Lord is risen, and is not now wrapped therein. Let them sing, "The Lord is risen from the dead who hung for us upon the Tree." The antiphon finished, let the prior, rejoicing with them in the triumph of our King in that, death vanquished, He has risen, begin the hymn Te Deum laudamus.

This begun, all the bells are rung together, at the end of which let the priest say the verse:

"Thou art the Resurrection, O Christ."

This is regarded as but one version of a ritual widely used and in varying form. Everywhere, at first, the properties were simple. A symbolic representation of the tomb was often made by heaping together service books on the altar, or a recessed tomb was used if there happened to be one in the chancel. Resurrection tombs later became a common feature of the interior architecture of beautiful Medieval churches, and in time came to be, in themselves, elaborate works of art.

The robes, vestments and ornaments belonging to the church usually sufficed for the other equipment. The Maries traditionally appeared with veiled heads, wearing surplices, copes, dolmatics, chasubles and albs, either white or colored. Sometimes the thuribles were replaced by vases or boxes, sometimes by lighted candles. Later, a strong illumination came from within the tomb when the angel appeared. Some old rubrics bid the Maries to go "pedetemptim" (sad and searching). Others prescribe that the angel wear wings and bear an ear of corn as a symbol of resurrection. At Dublin, St. John and St. Peter appear, the one in white and bearing a palm, the other in red and carrying a huge key.

These two characters introduced into the *Quem Quaeritis*, are typical of the way in which it took on more complex form. An exquisite lyrical element, which added greatly to its artistic effectiveness, was added in the form of the *planctus*, or lamentation of the Maries. An original manuscript, preserved at Tours, illustrates later elaboration. Its form is strikingly similiar in many respects to the Sixteenth Century *Resurrection* already quoted as having been revived in a

New York Protestant church. In it, Pilate sets a watch before the sepulchre. An angel sends lightning and the soldiers fall to the ground as if dead. The Maries appear and sing the *planctus*. There is then introduced a scene in which the Maries appear at a spice merchant's booth to buy incense and myrrh. Then comes the *Quem Quaeritis* proper, after which there follows the announcement to Pilate; the apparition of the Risen Lord to Mary Magdalen, and the announcement by the Maries to the disciples. Then Christ appears to the disciples and to Thomas, and finally the closing Te Deum is sung. The spice merchant episode is also found in an early version of liturgical drama in Prague.

With the intensely dramatic celebrations of Black Friday and of the succeeding happenings up to the Resurrection and beyond, it was but a matter of time until Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, should come to be celebrated with a succession of liturgical dramas. It was early the custom, after the reading of the lesson of the day in which "many people took palm branches and went forth to meet him," for the procession of palm bearers to march not only around the church

body, but around the church yard singing: "Hosanna, Blessed is the King of Israel that Cometh in the Name of the lord!" The cleansing of the temple, the healing of the leper, and the parable of the virgins all became "oratorios in which action was fitted to words." It was customary for a tenor voice to render the narrative of the evangelist, a treble the sayings of the Jews and the disciples, and a bass voice those of Christ himself (though it is to be observed that the traditions of the Roman church of to-day assign the parts differently). On Wednesday at the rendering of the words: "Velum templi scissum est!" there was a dropping of the veil which had hidden the altar during Lent. On Maundy Thursday, the ceremony of the washing of the disciples' feet was followed by the extinguishing of all lights to symbolize their grief.

These examples may serve to bring out the fact —touched upon many times in this volume, and observable wherever primitive religion is found —that definite dramatic expression follows the inherent impulse to worship.

The *Quem Quaeritis* gave rise to elaborate Easter celebrations which were at a later date

held outside the church, but it was, itself, never divorced from the church ritual, in which it continued to figure until the perversion of the drama in the hands of the laity brought it under church ban. As late as the last half of the sixteenth century, the church warden's books in many English parishes will be found to contain interesting records, with such items as:

Payde for making the sepulter . . 10s.
For peynting the same . . 3s.
To the sexton for meat and drink and watching the sepulter, according to custom 22d.

A *Quem Quaeritis* of the Christmas season was one of the first and most notable developments of the original Easter liturgical drama,—a *Quem Quaeritis in Praecepe* (Whom Seekest Thou in the Crib?) From it as a central theme, an Epiphany drama embracing the events of the twelve days of Christmas, was evolved. From its earliest form we still have, in all Catholic countries, the manger scene set up at one side of the chancel during this season. In fact, it is a familiar survival in both Protestant and Catholic churches in America to-day. According to an

JOSEPH, AS PLAYED BY A YOUNG ITALIAN

POMFRET "NATIVITY"

early French record, canons or vicars, representing the shepherds, originally approached the great west door of the choir. A boy *in similitudinem angeli* perched *in excelso* sang the good tidings of great joy, the curtain was drawn from the manger disclosing Joseph and Mary with the Infant Jesus, an ox and an ass.

So familiar has every detail of the Nativity been to us as individuals from our earliest childhood that there is no shock of surprise in seeing the living representation of these things replace the set tableaux. Perhaps then it was not strange to hear the exclamation of a child of three last year in a Methodist church where the drama of the Nativity was being presented. The manger scene had been reproduced upon the platform with the merest suggestion of detail. The light was dim and bluish to suggest a night scene, with only the radiance from the Christ-Child's crib to illuminate the faces of the Holy Family. Amidst a profound and worshipful silence, the tot exclaimed in a voice audible all around, "Mother, look at the little Jesus. And there behind him I see the cows and oxen!"

The Nativity, as we know it to-day, embraces

the characteristics of the *Stella* play, as it was called, which recounted the story of the following of the Star. This star was large, was illuminated by candles, and moved by mechanical means from the door to the chancel where it came to rest over the Manger. "The Magi," according to surviving rubrics, were directed at that moment to "lift their hands and point to the star as it hangs on the string before them."

Miss Katherine Lee Bates, in *English Religious Drama* quotes the text of an interesting Thirteenth Century French Play, *The Shepherds* written in verse, and with directions as follows:

On the holy Christmas Eve after the Te Deum, let the angel taking his place, announce that Christ is born, and utter these words:

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy."

Here let seven choir boys, standing in the gallery above, chant:

"Glory to God in the Highest!
Peace to the human race!
Earth is link't to Heaven
By reconciling grace!

God, the Reconciler
Bows to human ban
That into the gates of Paradise
May enter sinful Man!
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let us go and see if so
The very God hath willed.
Let us go if we may know
If the promise be fulfilled.

A baby cries in Bethlehem
Beneath the starry night,
The ancient adversary hears
And quakes for very fright.

Let us come, O let us come
Where the Lord of All
With maiden mother makes His home
In an ox's stall."

Then let the shepherds, carrying crooks in their hands, walk through the midst of the choristers, close up to Bethlehem, chanting as they go:

"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

As they draw near, two choristers being in the stall as nursing women, shall chant:

"Tell, O shepherds, whom seek ye in the manger?"

Let the shepherds make answer:

"Christ the Lord and Saviour, a child, wrapt in swaddling clothes, even as the angel said."

Thereat the nursing women draw aside the curtains revealing the child, chanting in their turn:

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son. Go ye, and announce that the Christ is born."

Then shall the Shepherds bow themselves before the Virgin singing:

"Hail, O hail, all peerless Maiden,
Thine enclasping arm is laden
With a child whose ages number
God's eternity.
Let us worship him in slumber
On his Mother's knee—"

And now that the child is clearly shown, let the shepherds bow themselves before him, then let them turn to the chorus, chanting:

"Alleluia! Alleluia! Now we know for a surety that upon earth is born the Christ in whose praise sing ye all with the Prophets, saying:—"

And here at once let the Mass be sung, and let the shepherds lead the choir in singing: "Glory to God in the Highest!"

The significance of some of these old celebra-

tions which have come down to us through the ages is tremendous. There is a freshness and a charm in their presentation of the old, old stories, which make them to-day worthy of a place in the most sacred church services. There are not only survivals of Christmas, Easter, and Annunciation liturgical dramas, but of many others modeled after them. As late as the middle of the sixteenth century, St. Paul's, in London, still symbolized the marvels of the Whitsuntide after the early manner by letting a white dove fly out through a hole which was regularly opened in the roof for the purpose. The same opening was used for the celebration of the Pentacost, a globe of fire, a white dove, and a tongue of flame being lowered as symbols of the Pentacostal Feasts. Many similar customs spread until they reached the utmost borders of civilization.

An interesting ritual of Church Dedication is of Gallican origin. It is a service of the banishing of evil spirits. The clergy form in ranks when a church is about to be dedicated, and approach it, singing:

"Lift up Ye Gates, O ye rulers, and be ye lifted up,

ye Everlasting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in."

Whereupon, a Scornful Voice from within the church:

"Who is this King of Glory?"

Whereat, the ranks of the Christians' God thunder:

"The Lord of Virtue, He is the King of Glory!"

Then the doors would fly open, and as the procession swept through, he who had been hidden inside, would slip out "quasi fugiens" to join the throng.

The liturgical drama was in a state of evolution until about the middle of the thirteenth century, according to Chambers,* during which time it was presented in Latin entirely. There was little congregational participation in the purely liturgical service not even so much as by the introduction of a hymn. The whisper that ran like a breeze through a field of ripe grain. . . . "Surrexit Christus" was to come later, as was the kiss of peace. As a definite entity, liturgical drama existed throughout Europe and had been presented hundreds of thousands of times in England before the first English literature was recorded.

* See Appendix.

It is interesting however to note that Hilarius, an Englishman of French education and one of the goliards, was the author of three liturgical dramas, typical of the highest development of the form. And, in evidence of the impress of growing Western scholarship on the drama, it was he who first gave us the liturgical play with a theme from outside the Bible;—a St. Nicholas play.

CHAPTER IX

THE PRECEDENT OF THE MEDIEVAL DRAMA

The early church objected to the drama of the pagans as being frankly immoral. As an idle amusement countenancing barred themes and idolatry, it offended their ascetic spirit. . . .

With the decay of paganism and the creation of a purer sentiment, the objections disappeared. The value of the stage as an educational force led the church to encourage drama. Nor is there any doubt that the theater has been a powerful agent in bringing the less educated to a knowledge of Bible history and in enforcing the church's moral teachings.

The whole tradition of the Catholic church, whether Roman or Anglican has been, like that of Lutheranism in Protestantism, distinctly favorable to pure and lofty drama.

—Hastings: Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.

PAGEANTRY as we know it to-day is of comparatively modern origin. Nevertheless, our religious pageants find no mean prototype in the remarkably conceived, if somewhat crude *Antichrist*, a widely known play of

the Twelfth Century. This play, of German origin, is based upon the prophecy of St. Paul to the Corinthians foretelling that a Bad Man (Homo pecanti, filius perditionis) shall sit in the temple of God till Christ shall slay him. The play was the first to introduce allegorical characters which were destined to be widely used in the morality plays of the fourteenth century and after. It illustrates admirably the growing tendency of the drama in some of its forms to slip down from the chancel to the nave of the church.

The play opens with an impressive processional in which the Emperor, the Pope and Kings accompanied by allegorical personages are followed by a large company of people. First there is a symbolic conquest of the four corners of Christendom by the Emperor championing Christianity. The Church, Pity, Justice, and the Synagogue are among the figures who give characteristically chanted responses. Then come the Hypocrites followed by Antichrist,—a magnificant masked figure, who instructs Hypocracy and Heresy to prepare the way for his advent. Antichrist is then enthroned upon a lofty and splendid throne of gold in the temple to which he summons his

vassals including many great potentates; he puts his mark on their brows. Then the Hypocrites attempt to persuade the Synagogue that Antichrist is the Messiah, but are refuted by a splendid appearance of the Prophets Enoch and Elias. The Antichrist has these rebels slain. But while he is enthroned in state, thunder bursts over his head. He falls, and the Powers of Right come into their own again amid a resounding laud from the choir.

Such a drama must have been a tremendous spectacle, filling as it did almost the entire nave of the largest cathedral; requiring for its production a great temple of God and space for marching and countermarching and for the clash of mighty warfare between the powers of Evil and of Good. It was the growth of such spectacle-dramas as this which necessitated the shifting of the stage, at last, to the courtyard outside the church. There, from about the middle of the Thirteenth century, it was to grow and develop not alone in artistic effectiveness but, generally, in religious significance for another hundred years before the invasion of the secular spirit began to pollute its pure stream.

PRECEDENT OF MEDIEVAL DRAMA

One of the oldest known examples of the churchyard play is a French *Representation of Adam*, only lately rediscovered. In form this play is an elaborate trilogy comprising *The Fall of Man, the Murder of Cain, and The Prophesies of Christ.* The elaborate rubrics, in Latin, are even to our present-day notion, remarkably clear and full in their detailed instructions as to gesture, scenery and costume.

"Paradise," it is directed, "shall be situated in a rather prominent place and hung all around with draperies and silk curtains to such a height that such persons as find themselves in Paradise shall be seen from the shoulders upward. There shall be sweet smelling flowers and foliage. There shall be different trees covered with fruit, so that the place shall appear agreeable." Adam is represented as dressed in a red tunic, and Eve in a white garment with a white silk veil. Adam is to be "trained well that he may speak at the right moment and come neither too early nor too late." It is in fact emphasized that "whoso names Paradise must look and point at it."

In this play, the Reader reads the Bible story of the Creation with responses from the chorus

grouped back in the shadowy recesses of the church. Then God Himself steps forth out of the church and calls Adam. He explains to Adam his duties in the Garden of Paradise and opens the door of Paradise to him. Adam and Eve are forbidden to taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, and then, "having ceased to speak, God withdraws into the church." Adam and Eve "walk about in Paradise with honest delight" until a bevy of devils, led by the Archfiend, appear and scramble about hither and thither, even darting down among the spectators and back again into the scene of action.

Adam is tempted by Eve, he eats, and recognizing his sin, abases himself. And please note the finesse with which he must abase himself so that the walls of "Paradise" may hide him from view of the spectators for he must now proceed to "put off his solemn raiment, and put on poor raiment sewn together of fig leaves, at the same time beginning to lament with an air of extreme dolour!" After the Angel with the Flaming Sword has driven Adam and Eve from Paradise, "Adam shall then have a spade, and Eve a hoe, and they shall begin to till the soil therewith."

Even while they sow, "looking tearfully to Paradise," the devils come and plant thorns and thistles. While the action is going on, God "comes and goes," through the church door, keeping watch over it.

Time and increasing civilization evolve a loftier conception of God. To-day, with the tremendous revival of religious drama, and the visual representation of some of the most sacred portions of the Scripture, we shrink from the very idea of any representation of God. The Voice of God is introduced only in plays of profound religious appeal and high artistic worth, such as *Abraham and Isaac*, *Everyman* and some of Madame Guilbert's beautiful Catholic revivals of the Medieval cyclic miracles of the French. Nevertheless there is an appealing quality in the childlike faith with which our forebears gave the most perfect and the most majestic outward form of which they were capable, to their innermost conception of God, "in whose image man was made."

Other plays of this character, known to have been enacted, include scenes portraying the Creation of the Angels and the Fall of Lucifer.

When, historians agree, the *Fall of Man* had become a full-grown artistic conception, as the *Crucifixion* and the *Resurrection* had long been, it was but a matter of time until the full "cosmic drama" should come into existence, because there was a constantly increasing tendency toward the assemblage of dramatized Bible episodes into great unified productions. The earliest semblance of the Passion Play was in Siena, Italy, in the early part of the thirteenth century and was made up of numerous little episodic dramas, including the *Calling of Peter and Andrew*, the *Healing of the Blind Zaccheus*, the *Entry into Jerusalem*, a long and somewhat allegorical episode of the conversion of the Magdalen, the *Raising of Lazarus*, the *Entry into Jerusalem*, the *Betrayal by Judas*, the *Last Supper*, the *Mount of Olives*, the *Passion* itself from Gethsemane to the Cross, the *Three Maries*, and a scene where Joseph of Arimathea pleads for the Lord's body. The *Fall of Man* was first added to the redemption, and the whole brought together as a Passion Play rather as we think of it to-day, in Vienna.

As an example of the beautiful verisimilitude

which the acting had taken on when the liturgical drama first developed into Passion Play form, let us look at the Latin rubrics of this Italian production. When Mary comes to the cross, she laments:

> Oh pain, Oh pain, Why
> Oh Beloved Son, dost thou hang thus?
> Thou who art Life
> And hast been from the beginning.

She is bidden to "wring hands," in line one; to "open hands and point" during two, three and four; and in the lines which follow, she "beats her breast."

"This new fashion of pious plays," says Tunison (*Dramatic Tradition of the Dark Ages*), referring to the Passion Play, "was more thoughtful than the world now is apt to suppose. The prophets of the Old Testament had developed a philosophy of history which was a romance, an epic, and a drama all in one. It can still be read as an epic in *Milton*, *Klopstock*, or *Du Bartas;* as a romance in the *Prince of the House of David*, in *Ben Hur*, or the *Light of the World;* as a drama in *Christus Patiens*, in *Faust* and in

the plays of Oberammergau, not to mention the other versions innumerable that are in existence. It is an imaginative amplification of St. Paul's sayings about the fullness of time. The unity of this epic, romance or drama lies in the necessary continuity of man's struggle against sin. It forms a trilogy: man's fall, his redemption, his compulsory appearance before God on the day of judgment. Thus the fully developed Passion Play took in all humanity in all its vanities and virtues and vices, wit and stupidity, humor and solemnity, wisdom and folly . . . it went from good to bad, revealing the whole individual life and the whole course of history. It was rude in form but wonderful in scope, and the modern world has not yet got beyond its horizon with all the boasted culture of the present day.

"In truth, it was not merely a medieval conception. It was a variant of the plain thought of the New Testament, of the Hebrew prophets as the Christians had always read them, and of the fathers of the church, those who wrote in Greek as well as those who wrote in Latin."

It was the change of the action from the inside to the outside of the church which more

EASTERN SUNRISE SERVICE

Mt. Roubideaux

than anything else gave impetus to the always strongly present tendency toward cyclic plays. The spring and early summer became a season when the holy days were celebrated by "miracle plays" as they were now called. People from far and near thronged to the productions. As these grew constantly more elaborate and ambitious, they were financed to a greater extent by outside people, and participated in more and more by the craft guilds, some members of which had, from the earliest outdoor performances, actively taken part "by way of showing their religious fervor and devotion."

Whitsuntide and Corpus Christi day became the great religious occasions of the year. The latter, in England, became, after 1311, the particular date for the great religious processional of the year. It was a festival occasion which, in the words of Gayley: "Stirred the sense of civic solidarity and of that wider communion of the saints which is the church universal. Archbishop and acolyte, cleric and laity, mayor and craftsman not of one city or diocese or province, but of every corner of the spiritual principality of the catholic world, on that day marched in ecstatic

procession to honor the church invisible, visible in the flesh,—the God incarnate manifest in the Host. History and prophecy were fused in one moment, and that the present."

At first, the processionals were everywhere replete with "living pictures." St. Andrew and his Cross, Adam and Eve, bearing the Tree of Knowledge between them, John the Baptist, leading a Lamb, Judas bending beneath the weight of his money bags, and "closely followed by the horned and blackened devil considerately bringing along the gallows,"—these were familiar figures along the line of march. It was not strange, then, that the "pictures" should develop dialogue and action and finally outgrow their place in the processional, just as the tropes had outgrown their place in the processional of the Mass. Little dramas, or *miracles* carrying forward the Bible story from Creation to the Day of Judgment gradually came to be mounted on stages with wheels and to move along as the processional moved. However, the plays usurped the major place of interest to such an extent that they had to be given upon a separate day.

According to a well-known description of the Chester cycle, written by Archbishop Rogers in 1595, but typical of the performances from the first:

"The 'pageant' was a high scaffold with two rooms, a higher and a lower. In the lower, the players appareled themselves. In the higher, they played, this being all open on top that all beholders might see and hear them. The place where they played was in the street. They began first at the Abbey gate; and when the first pageant was played it was wheeled to the high cross before the Mayor, and so to every street. And so every street a pageant that played before it all the time. And when one pageant was ended, word was brought from street to street that so they might come in place thereof, exceedingly orderly; and all the streets have their pageants afore them playing at one time together. To see which play was a great resort. . . ."

These "pageants" themselves, as the mounted stages were commonly called from their earliest days, were sometimes made in fantastic shapes for the purposes of the particular play. Hell's

Mouth, in the form of a great dragon with open jaws, was a favorite form as was Noah's Ark and the Fiery Furnace.

Anyone who was in Washington in the summer of July 1919 and witnessed the International Pageant of Peace could but have been reminded of those medieval presentations. There, thousands of people took part in, and hundreds of thousands of people witnessed, a "cyclic drama" of International Peace; elaborate; splendid almost beyond description; but remarkably akin in many respects to the "drama of struggling mankind." Here, a series of six large pageant-dramas was staged simultaneously before six of our nation's most splendid official buildings. Following this "pageants mounted on wheels," or beautiful floats representing a consolidation of the six units and embracing exhibits of every civilized country of the world, united in a pageant parade. From the standpoint of the student of social development, there have been no greater moments in American life, than those in which the parade finally passed in review before the Capitol steps just as dusk deepened into dark; that those in which, the parade ended, the final culminating

scenes were played on the great eastern steps, no longer merely steps, but transformed, now, into a splendid sort of stage upon which a myriad soft-colored lights played. With the massed choruses of the whole great city augmented by the voices of the multitudes thick packed down all the slopes and almost as far as the eye could see, there was a volume of song impossible to describe, almost unendurably beautiful.

And what has this to do with medieval precedent? With the religious revival? Nothing, except that we are trying to show how old forces are assembling to new synthesis. With the precedent of the medieval religious drama, with the high level of spirituality which one feels throbbing through the multitude on such occasions as the post-war epoch has brought about, our potentialities are limitless.

As the craft guild cyclic plays grew in number and in the expense of production, rivalry among the guilds increased. Each guild came to prepare its own pageant annually and to be responsible for the expense attached thereto. An interesting tradition developed in the assignment of the sections. The shipwrights had first rights

to the Noah's Ark pageant, the fish mongers, the Flood, the "naylors and sawyers" the Massacre of the Innocents, and the cooks the section known as the Harrowing of Hell *because cooks were accustomed to dealing with fire!*

Permission to present a pageant had to be obtained from the mayor. Gradually the entire productions came more and more under municipal supervision, and eventually under municipal control. Even then, they were, for the most part, given with religious sanction and aid. In 1426, one William Merton of the Friars Minors was influential in the production of the *Corpus Christi* plays at York. He is set down in the city directory, in fact, as *Professor Paginae Sacrae*, which Gayley, with interesting comment thereon, translates as Professor of Religious Pageantry.

Looking back on the medieval drama through the long perspective of time we can see how honest impulse toward religious expression was gradually developing into a great, inclusive art form. We can see how it became gradually, a vehicle of amusement as well as of religious devotion—came to give pleasurable sensual satisfaction as well as to stimulate higher sentiments.

The element of comic relief in incongruous forms, crept in to the most sacred moments of the plays. But "that the food for mirth was of the coarsest should not be taken as proving intentional irreverence on the part of the players or of the hearers," Miss Bates thinks. Because "the conditions of family life for the lower classes of the English when Chaucer and Langland wrote and the *miracle* plays were in the full tide of popularity, precluded delicacy of manner and speech."

With the merely indirect control and influence of the church, this new element inevitably became more prominent, until actual vulgarity and wilful obscenity finally caused the church to ban the drama. Had there been authorities to differentiate the functions of the drama as we believe we are differentiating them to-day, it is easy to see that the whole history of modern theatrical art might have been different.

There are qualities of pure humanness, towering artistic aspirations, and touching evidence of the deepest reverence in the records of those productions which have come down to us, from Cornish, from York, Coventry, Wakefield and Chester, the best known centers of the great

medieval cyclic dramas. Both in town and city records and in old church wardens' account books, we find amusing data covering the actual expenditures for these plays. The director of the church basement little theater will find in almost any library * adequate material for piecing together a detailed account of the medieval staging and costuming of religious plays which would contrast interestingly with our own "little theater" ideals of productions in the church to-day. From a church warden's accounts of a cyclic play given in Chelmsford, Essex, in 1562–1563, the following items are taken:

Inprims paid unto the mynstrolls for the Show Day and for the Play Day ....

Unto Willm Hewit for makg the vices coote, a fornet of borders and a jerken of borders ....

To John Lockyer for makg iiij shep hoks and for iron work that Burle occupied for the hell ....

To Lawrence for watching in the Churche when the temple was a drynge ....

To Willm Withers for making a frame for the heven stage and tymber for the same ....

For wrytyge ....

to John Wrigt for making a cottee of lether for Christ ....

* See Appendix.

for fyftie fadam of lyne (probably lime) for the cloudes

Other items, miscellaneously gleaned, include:

Item: Link for setting the world on fire—
Pair of new hose and mending of the old hose for white souls.—
Paid for 9½ yards of buckram for soul's coats.—
Starch to make a storm.—
God's Gloves and mending God's head.—

Sources of information are suggested in the appendix for the student who wishes to trace the detailed development of religious drama from the liturgical play in its simplest from through the cyclic miracles, and including such developments as the Saints' plays and Virgin plays, and the *Moralities*. During the centuries in which the evolution was taking place, it must be remembered that liturgical drama in its purest, though not always in its simplest form, was kept as a part of the church services, an essential part of worship. It is not difficult for us to-day, with our great and growing sensibility to the æsthetic appeal, to imagine those medieval cathedrals with their "grey walls hung with storied tapestries" their "dim vaults echoing with solemn Gregorians," and the "splendid

dramatic ceremonials which made visible the poignant religion of the Christian people." There, in the words of Ralph Adams Cram, "was the most perfect plexus of perfected arts the world has ever known . . . and through all the assembled arts, radiated like colored fire through the jeweled windows, the awe, wonder and worship of men who had seen some faint adumberation of the Beatific Vision, and who called aloud to their fellows in the universal language of art, the glad tidings of great joy: *that by art man might achieve, AND THROUGH ART MAN MIGHT REVEAL!*"

CHAPTER X

SURVIVAL AND REVIVAL

WITH the approach of the summer of 1922, the eyes of the artistic as well as the religious world turned toward the Tyrolean village of Ober Ammergau and the Passion Play—the most remarkable religious survival in the world. It is thought that as early as the twelfth century, these villagers had their cyclic *miracles*. But the Passion Drama as it is known to-day dates definitely back to the year 1633, when, following the thirty years war, Ober Ammergau was gripped by a plague which threatened to wipe out its very existence as other villages were being wiped out. After all means of checking the scourge had failed, and daily deaths were multiplying with increasing rapidity, all the people who were still unaffected came together to lift up their voices in a petition to heaven. They cried aloud that if they were only spared they would repent of their sins, and in

token of their godly lives, would every ten years present the Drama of the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

From that very hour, it is said, the plague was stayed. Those who were ill, recovered, and no others were infected. The following year, the first Passion Drama was given, and one has been given every ten years since except in cases of Providential intervention such as great wars. In 1870 (for the Passion Play had long since been changed to the first year of each decade), the Christ, perforce, "came down from the Cross" to serve in the Franko-Prussian war. In 1920, the World War was still too present a reality, and European travel was still in too chaotic a condition to permit that event to take place which has long since become the object of world pilgrimage. Consequently, the play was postponed to 1922.

For a year before its performance, the Passion Play is the supreme object in the lives of the villagers. The Burgomeister, or mayor, is always the official head of the Passion Play Committee, often taking an important part in the production as well. This committee is made up

of nineteen members, and meets every week during the entire year, being responsible for choosing the cast and appointing and directing all sorts of sub-committees.

There is a strong tendency toward recasting for the same parts, villagers who have impersonated the Biblical characters with distinction. Anton Lang, who played the Christ part in 1922, did so for the third time, having ever since his first appearance, in 1900, taken the part with a dignity and spirituality hitherto unprecedented. The Virgin Mary, being a young girl, is chosen anew, of course, each decade. It is said that Johann Zwink, the veteran player who has had prominent character parts in the production since the year 1870; once took the part of Judas with such conviction that he not only brought tears to the eyes of all beholders, but actually so identified himself with the remorseful character that he hanged himself and had to be rescued.

The rehearsals are conducted regularly over a period of seven months, the actors devoting themselves to their parts with a religious zeal that makes preparation as well as production an act of devotion.

The play, as it is given to-day, has been revised several times and offers an interesting contrast to the original manuscript which is carefully preserved. To Father Daisenberger is due much of the unaffected simplicity of the Passion Play as we know it. For thirty five years—until his death in 1883—he was the leading spirit in the production as well as the mental, moral and spiritual councillor of Ober Ammergau. The play, with its extremely faithful rendering of the human side of the martyrdom of Jesus Christ, falls into three divisions. It has eighteen acts, each of which has a prologue of Old Testament prophecy or action, "so introduced that the thoughtful spectator will be able to realize the grand truth that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, made Man for our salvation, is the central figure of the whole inspired volume."

The first division depicts the scenes from the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem to the Arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, and has seven acts:

1. The Triumphal Entry
2. The Sanhedrin
3. The Leave-Taking at Bethany

4. The Last Journey
5. The Last Supper
6. Judas, the Traitor
7. The Garden of Gethsemane.

The Second Division, from the Arrest to the Condemnation by Pilate, also has seven acts:

8. Christ Before Annas
9. Christ before Caiaphas
10. The Despair of Judas
11. Christ Before Pilate
12. Christ Before Herod
13. Christ Scourged and Crowned with Thorns
14. Christ Condemned to Death

The Third Division, from the Condemnation to the Resurrection, has four acts:

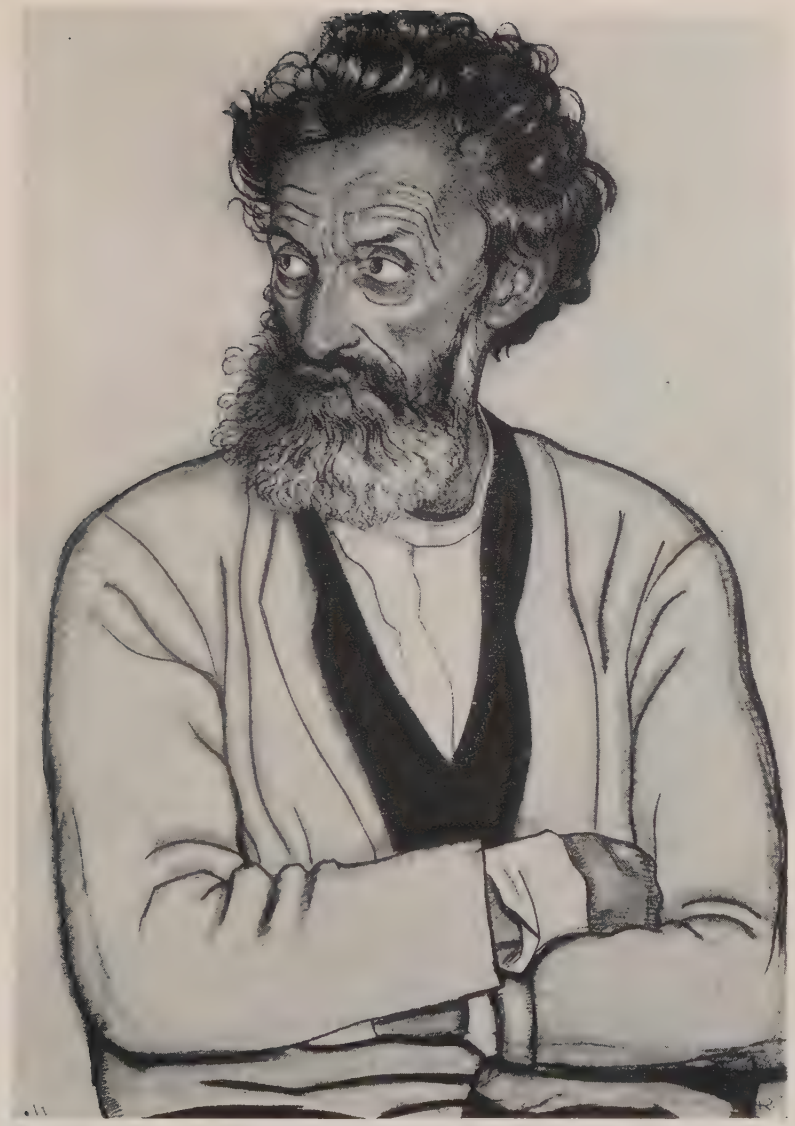
15. The Way of the Cross
16. The Crucifixion
17. The Resurrection
18. The Ascension

The first of the many tableaux represents the Fall of Man. Subsequent tableaux depict Joseph

Betrayed by his Brethren; the Bride, described in the Songs of Solomon, mourning the Bridegroom; the Gathering of Manna in the Wilderness; the Return of the Spies from the Promised Land; and Samson Avenging Himself on the Philistines. Many of these scenes are closely interblent with the action of the play.

There are about six hundred performers in the Passion Play, one hundred and twenty-five of whom have speaking parts. Another hundred are actively engaged in the details of the production. As many as three and four hundred persons appear in some of the tableaux. The action requires about eight hours and takes place without intermissions, beginning early in the morning.

Mass is daily celebrated by the players before they go to take their parts. Special religious training accompanies the formal preparation for the Play season. And the single-mindedness with which the villagers offer their Passion Play in keeping with the ancient religious vow and to the Glory of God is nowhere more manifest than in their repeated rejection of almost fabulous prices to play elsewhere, on a commercial basis. The Thirty Pieces of Silver in the coin of every



From the drawing by Winold Reiss

JOHANN ZWINK AS JUDAS

realm of civilized world have been steadfastly refused with smiling rebuke. Commercial theaters, failing to obtain even the right to reproduce the play, or scenes from it, or its music; and motion picture magnates finding, at last, something that their money will not buy, turn away discouraged; while the simple villagers go about their peaceful artistic everyday lives of work and worship.

"What a revelation it is," a London publisher exclaims, "of the mine of latent capacity,—musical, dramatic, intellectual,—in the human race, that a single mountain village can furnish under capable guidance and with adequate inspiration such a host competent to set forth such a play from the tinkers, tailors, ploughmen, bakers and the like!" *It is not capacity that is lacking to mankind. It is the guiding brain, the patient love, the careful education, and the stimulation and inspiration of a great idea.*"

Just as there has been no more remarkable a survival than the Passion Play, there has been no more remarkable a revival than *Everyman*, the Morality play which figures so prominently in the later development of medieval religious

drama, and which is thought by many to be the most perfect specimen contained in the whole body of didactic plays, ancient or modern. It has become familiar to American audiences during the last twenty-five years. In such skillful hands as those of the Ben Greet Players and of Charles Rann Kennedy and Edith Wynn Matthison, in their own company, it has been produced in prominent commercial theaters, out of doors, and, recently, in churches. It has also, of recent years, been repeatedly produced by amateur groups, including church club players.

Mr. Kennedy says of it: "I consider it an almost ideal church play, whether for amateurs or anybody else to produce, and I have heard of a great many very excellent church performances of it just recently." In one production in a New England church, this "drama of the soul of man" was produced in a chancel hung with draperies of pale gray canton flannel and lighted by footlights set in the base of the front row of pews, with "baby" spots operated from the wings. In an Illinois production, it was played on a removable platform extension of the chancel similar to the one used in St. Mark's-in-the-

Bouwerie, New York, when Mr. Kennedy, Edith Wynn Matthison and their company played it.

Interestingly in contrast with these productions was the presentation of *Everyman* in October, 1921, in the courtyard of the ancient Cathedral of Salzburg. This was the occasion of the somewhat sensational return of the drama to the church in Europe. The director was no less famous a personage than Max Reinhardt, director of the Berlin State Theater, where, it is understood, the *Everyman* theme has been the subject of interesting experiment for some time past. The façade of the Cathedral was used as the stage and the courtyard of the Archbishop's palace as an auditorium. The great organ and the bells of the basilica were used, as was the orchestra which habitually accompanies the organ. The sound came through the windows "opening upon the court in the same gallery where the author of *The Magic Flute* directed the oratorios for the cardinal princes of the century before last."

The *Everyman* thus presented was not the original version, but was an adaptation by a well-known European author and playwright, Hugo d'Hofmannsthal, who is also librettist of some

of Richard Strauss's most brilliant operas. However much the *Jedermann* differed from the original, it was no less simple, and was played in broad daylight with its few properties consisting mainly of tables and chests.

Simple Bavarian and Tyrolean peasants flocked from far and near, much as their ancestors must have flocked in centuries past for the annual church yard performances of religious plays, except that their numbers were swelled by throngs of grand visitors in motor cars from the most brilliant centers of European life. Believers and unbelievers alike among the whole multitude of spectators were stirred by a deep religious emotion as the play progressed. The entire undertaking was so successful that interest has been aroused in making Salzburg the center of an annual folk festival production.

It is not improbable that, as wide-spread interest in the revival of religious drama continues, the entire body of surviving Medieval dramatic material will become more generally known and widely used, either for actual production or as a basis and guide for productions of many sorts. Already, one amateur theater with a brilliant rec-

EDITH WYNN MATTHISON, AS "EVERYMAN"

ACCOMPANIED BY "GOOD DEEDS" AND "KNOWLEDGE"

ord of achievements has interested itself in Medieval programs. The Fireside Players, of White Plains, New York, who, for a number of years have found a home in a church hall, during the season of 1921–1922, presented a series of programs, each containing a *miracle* play, an *interlude*, and a *morality*, the three familiar drama forms of the later period of religious plays.

Abraham and Isaac is, next to *Everyman*, perhaps, the best known example of these early plays. Because it is replete with intense dramatic feeling and poetic beauty, it has been a favorite production with some art theater groups, and "little" theaters. Certainly the church producing group with sufficient technique could find no more beautiful a drama of the Old Testament. The most notable productions have been under the guiding hand of no less an authority of the art theater world than Mr. Sam Hume. In the Arts and Crafts Theater, Detroit, during the season of 1916–1917, he not only directed it, but also played the part of Abraham. The production was elaborated by the introduction of numerous choruses. Under his direction, the play was also given at the Art Institute in St. Paul. This play

was written in the last half of the Fifteenth Century. An interesting note, presumably referring to this drama, records that "a book of the play belonging to the 'schaft' or parochial guild of St. Dunstan, Canterbury, Kent, lay in the keeping of the church wardens' for a considerable time from 1491 onward.

Consideration of the Saints plays and Virgin plays, of which so large a number were written during the Middle Ages, has had no particular place in our consideration of early religious drama, as they seemed somewhat outside the main line of development. Some modern Saints plays will be found listed in almost every bibliography of religious drama, and there are also modern Virgin plays perfectly adapted to the Protestant chancel and parish hall stage as well as the Catholic. But it has remained for Madame Yvette Guilbert to revive for us some of the quaint fourteenth century *St. Nikolas* and *Virgin* plays as they have been preserved in manuscript form in the *Bibliothetique Nationale*, in Paris.

Madame Guilbert has brought all of her superb mastery of the dramatic art to bear upon the creation of a medieval religious atmosphere where

the action takes place to the accompaniment of the cathedral organ music of the Mass, exactly as it was played centuries ago. With characteristic courage she reproduces comedy characters and angels and archangels; scenes sublime and scenes fantastic and quaintly humorous. And interested and extremely interesting audiences in at least three of New York's commercial theaters recently have attested to the re-awakened interest in the artistic and historical values of Medieval drama.

"I glory in the return of the drama to the church," Madame Guilbert said just before leaving for France to reproduce there these revivals shown in New York during the past few seasons. "I have known in my heart for the past twenty years that the church would come to the theater if the theater did not become purified enough to go to the church. But the church has been the wiser and taken the first step, which I know is only the beginning toward bringing back faith and freshness to the hearts of men."

When the Arts Theater of the Carnegie Institute of Technology revived one of the most ancient themes known to Biblical drama, and pro-

duced during the season of 1921–1922 the *Song of Songs*, it did so entirely without regard to precedent. There is record of an early Greek churchman who wrote a moral allegory based upon the Songs of Solomon, representing the Bridegroom, our Lord; the Bride, the Church; the Friends of the Bridegroom, the Saints and Angels; and the Friends of the Bride, the Church Followers. There is also record of a Medieval Wedding Drama wrought out of the Songs of Solomon.

But when Mr. Hubert Osborne, of the Drama Department of the Carnegie Institute chose this theme, it was to present it as a human document divested of Oriental mysticism,—symbolic of its period, and characteristic of its author,—a King of Israel who wrecked his kingdom through sensuality; and sacrificed the destinies of his people to the satisfaction of his ambitions. The play diverged widely from the accepted meaning of the text, being amplified, virtually, into a Drama of Admonition, by the use of texts from Kings, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. While preserving the innate beauty and poetic feeling of the text, it attained a dignity, a sincerity and a reverence pro-

"ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN THEE"

A Scene from the Hollywood Pilgrimage Play

foundly appealing. The program was repeated a number of times by request, special performances being asked by such groups as the Pittsburgh Confederation of Women.

It argues well for the ultimate effectiveness of revived religious drama, and its place in the renaissance of religious art, that among its pioneers it can count some of the great spirits of the theater as well as of the church. Some of the former have already been mentioned. To them might be added such names as that of Stuart Walker, of whose superb rendition of the *Book of Job* we are to hear more in the not too far distant future. And that of Ruth St. Denis, whose return to the speaking stage recently was in the leading role of *Miriam, Sister of Moses*, at the Greek Theater, University of California.

What shall we say of the *Life of Christ*, the "American Passion Play," as it has been produced for two seasons at Hollywood, California, through the inspiration and under the guidance of Mrs. W. Yorke Stevenson, of Philadelphia? Nothing could be further removed, certainly, from the nature of the Ober Ammergau Passion Play, than is the California *Pilgrimage Play*, as

it is called. The one is the outward expression of a deeply religious conviction which motivates the daily and hourly existence of those to whom sincerity and simplicity are, among the graces of life, most worthy. The other has grown out of the conviction that a literal transcription into dramatic form of the New Testament Gospels should constitute "the most stupendous drama ever lived or penned, and needing only a conscientous arrangement to bring it before the world in a new light,—that of the snythetic theater."

Beginning with a musical prologue of the prophecy of Christ's coming, the play depicts twelve leading scenes from his Life and Teachings, from His Baptism to the Resurrection, ending with an epilogue of promise suggestive of the Ascension and the Second Coming. The setting, known as *El Camino Real* theater, is perhaps, the country's most remarkable scene of outdoor drama. Situated in a canyon, it utilizes as its stage a natural amphitheater in a rugged mountainside. By the subtle spell of almost perfect lighting, soft Rembrandt lights and shadows steal over the mountainside and fade from it with the suggestion of different hours of the day. A glowing sunrise

lights the village of Samaria, or the Christ figure is bathed in a golden aura against a background of purple evening shadows.

The settings,—the street scene of Jerusalem, the house of Mary and Martha, the Samarian well, the Mount of Olives—were designed by Mrs. Stevenson's assistants with the aid of Mr. B. R. Maybeck, who was the architect of the Fine Arts Building at the San Francisco fair. Unlike the Ober Ammergau Christus; the Christ part, as was understood from the beginning, was to be kept unidentified with any human character. This role was first acted by Mr. Henry Herbert in a manner so touching that it brought tears to the eyes of all beholders. Subsequently, Mr. Reginald Poel has played it with equal appeal.

The whole production, in keeping with the best art theater ideals, represents the co-ordinated and entirely unselfish efforts of sincere and loyal workers, who have given themselves whole-heartedly to the production without thought of remuneration or even recognition. "There is, throughout," says Mrs. Stevenson, "a sense of personal loyalty to the play for its own sake, for the sake of the

great message which was written in blood 2,000 years ago. This puts all the players on their mettle to the end that the 'good tidings' may shine forth in all their glory."

The Christ is not called upon to utter one word which He does not utter in the Gospel. These, he utters with such manly simplicity, perfection of diction and sympathetic charm that their truth is evident to every hearer. When he seats himself on the steps of a street in Jerusalem, and gathering about him the little children, tells them the Parable of the Good Shepherd, a very human baby voice from his shoulder, lisps that "Sheep always know the voice of the shepherd"; and the children's lingering farewells to him as they are hurried off the stage is greeted by a ripple of very tender laughter from the spectators.

These players, who have devoted themselves to a great art ideal which they conceive as becoming still greater, as through it they portray the Sacred Life, are organized into a non-profit-making corporation. To make the production commercially profitable, they believe, would be to lose the intimate and sacred atmosphere peculiar to the present setting, and necessary for the fullest

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

Detroit Art Theatre Production: Mr. Sam Hume, as Abraham

expression of the spiritual import of the Story. They, too, like the Bavarian Villagers, have repeatedly refused the Thirty Pieces of Silver.

CHAPTER XI

A COMMUNAL RELIGIOUS CELEBRATION

REMARKABLE as it seems to us that the people of an ancient European village, such as Ober Ammergau, should come together to present a true Drama of Worship, it is even more remarkable that the representative people of a New England village (where the unbroken Puritanical tradition flourishes side by side with a newly grown-up heterogeneity of interests, —racial social and religious) should annually produce such a drama.

And yet, just when the churches are beginning to be convinced of the truth of Martin Luther's utterance that "these things move the people far more than public preaching," the little village of Pomfret, Connecticut, has already begun the preparation of her tenth annual Nativity play, the like of which is unknown in America or elsewhere.

RELIGIOUS CELEBRATION

Each year with the approach of the Christmas season, those who have built the play come together, as a matter of course, to counsel and plan for the play. It is not a hard and fast production conceived by one person and enacted according to direction, but is, to a very great extent, an expression of the thoughts and feelings of the individuals who take part. The Shepherds have developed their own action, the Wise Men theirs. Mary and Joseph manifest such feelings as the contemplation of the events stir in them. If there are artists in the celebration, there are also artisans. In short, the presentation is the flowering of the events involved, not of the qualities of the individual actors.

The whole countryside, including the people of the neighboring towns assembles to see the celebration. Of recent times people from the larger New England cities have come on pilgrimages until the crowd entirely overflows the bare and somewhat crude little hall, and fills the nearby church where those who are awaiting a second performance sing carols.

Without any announcement or preliminaries of any kind, the strains of an old familiar carol

interrupt the murmur of conversation. Slowly, at first, the audience joins in singing "Once in Royal David's City," and gradually as this gives place without pause to other songs equally familiar and equally bound up with the season, everyone sings heartily and lustily. Those who do not know the words, hum the air. At the last notes of the last song die away, the lights are turned out. Only a candle or a lantern remains here and there, intensifying the primitive simplicity of the setting. Simply, without comment, the story is read from the Bible by one of the village ministers (a different one each season):—the Annunciation, from Luke i, 26–38; the Birth of Christ, from Luke xi, 1-12; and the visit of the Magi, from Matthew xi, 1, 12.

Out of the silence that follows, softly at first but gradually increasing in volume, comes the heavenly voice of an invisible singer, singing "Silent Night, Holy Night." The sound ceases, but the harmony continues in a low hummed chorus that rises and swells, and then dies away as the curtain ascends.

Mary, the Virgin, kneels in prayer, hands clasped in devout piety, her draperies sweeping

THE ANGEL APPEARS TO JOSEPH IN A DREAM

Scene from the Pomfret "Nativity"

the floor. Simply, from out the shadows emerges a figure in trailing garments of white. It is the Angel of the Annuciation, who approaches in silent majesty, with the familiar message which has been read by the minister:

"Hail, thou that art highly favored! The Lord is with thee! Blessed art thou among women!"

The face of the humble maiden is filled with wonder, bewilderment, fright, as she lifts it toward the Heavenly visitant, as she tries to comprehend the mystery. But the reassurance of the "Fear not: thou hast found favor with God," sinks into her heart until, filled with awe and inspiration at the portent of the unearthly message, she submits in proud humility, her arms crossed on her breast, her head bowed upon them. Thus the angel leaves her. Thus the curtain descends upon her, to rise again before the silent spectators begin to emerge from the spell which the scene has laid upon them. It rises, disclosing a hillside under a deep blue night sky, where shepherds are watching their flocks by night. One paces to and fro, a stout staff in hand, his eyes searching the heavens. Others presently join him, the glimmer

of a lantern falling across their faces as they move to speak to each other.

The sentinel has a foreboding of some unusual occurrence, but the others wearied by their day's duties, go about kindling a fire, and finally sink to sleep before its cheerful blaze. Again the sentinel paces up and down, alert. He would take counsel of his friends but that they sleep. As he watches, a bright light appears in the distance, at first like a star but coming gradually nearer. He is in a tremor of expectancy. The sleepers stir. One after another, they arouse themselves and gaze at the light that draws nearer and nearer, gleaming, glowing, gradually showing itself as an angelic Presence of fiery white beauty, before which the shepherds fall back and draw together in spite of themselves, "For the Glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid." Those newly aroused hide their eyes from the too great brightness. But the Heavenly Messenger is gentle, friendly, comforting, for he has come not to bring fear, but as the bearer of good tidings of great joy.

Even as the revelation is made to the shepherds: "Unto you this day in the City of David,

is born a Saviour which is Christ, the Lord," a Heavenly Host appears in the distance, joyous, dancing, with trumpets and harps, and palm branches, proclaiming the glad tidings, praising God and singing: "Glory to God in the Highest." With a rush they sweep down upon the shepherds, with the bearing not of supernatural visitants from some far place, formal and awe-inspiring, but with all of the beautiful human attributes of the Heavenly Visitants of the old *miracles*, only filled with a more than human understanding. It is not until they are drifting away again that the shepherds bestir themselves and spring up to follow, saying one to another as is recorded in the Gospel:

"Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing . . . which the Lord hath made known to us."

Grasping their staves and their crooks, they go, leaving the stage deserted. When they reappear it is upon the humble scene in the bare, dark stable of Bethlehem where there is only the light from the manger glowing up into the face of Mary, the Mother kneeling beside it and penetrating the shadows which enshroud the figure of

Joseph. Shrinkingly, timidly the shepherds steal in, one by one drawn irresistibly to the Light, and as irresistibly shrinking toward the corners. Gradually they approach the manger. They bow down and worship and then depart.

The kings of the Orient rich in wisdom as in possessions come in followed by a magnificent train of attendants looking for One who is King of Kings. Unheeded by the humble virgin of the people they cast down their gifts before the straw-filled crib and bow down in adoration of the Child, the One who had not place to lay his head, but before whom their rich gifts are but tawdry tinsel. Finally, the Angel of Joseph's dream appears protectively hovering over the Holy Family, again alone, there in the dark place with only the beasts about them, and bids them flee unto Egypt "there to be until I bring the Word."

The final curtain goes down. Something like a half-sob, half-sigh is audible from the spectators as they bestir themselves and turn away,—minds filled, imagination touched with the superb beauty of the spectacles; and with the sound of old familiar carols coming from behind the scenes and floating around them, filling the air and prolong-

ing the mystic mood of wonder and awe and delight. It is the train schedule, the waiting limousine, the homely task to be resumed at daybreak, which have become, momentarily, the unrealities before the great Reality of the Christmas Message which throbs and pulses throughout the humble hall.

Such is the Pomfret *Nativity* of to-day—an undertaking begun experimentally in 1912; and at that time little more than a series of beautiful tableaux. And because in the hearts and minds of many in American communities there has begun to stir the impulse toward the creation of such living, reverential spectacles of beauty, it will not be amiss to describe briefly the genesis of the Pomfret celebration.

First, this village was not lacking in the "capable guidance," the "patient love" and the "adequate inspiration" necessary for freeing its particular "mine of latent capacity,—musical, dramatic, intellectual." It has been largely due to the quality of this guidance, love and inspiration that what, at first, was undertaken as a series of tableaux, has grown and developed into a drama of dignity and power, replete with a symbolic sig-

nificance which renders the old, old story strikingly new. To local people belongs the credit for those incomparable qualities of leadership without which the coincident artistic and spirtual growth of any such undertaking is impossible. As a result of this leadership, Pomfret has developed a rich communal life of the only kind from which a play such as the *Nativity*, could grow.

Let one of the local people describe its early history:

"Our scenes from the *Nativity* took place in Pomfret by as spontaneous an impulse as that by which the early religious ceremonials developed the *miracle* play. . . . It was a formidable alien setting, a New England village of the most unyielding traditions, complicated—not tempered—by every sort of modern cosmopolitan influence; so that its conflicting currents are most disturbing to foreign crafts. And surely, nothing could be more out of the ordinary than the enactment of those holy mysteries of Bethlehem in any modern American village.

"Two months earlier than that first performance our Neighborhood Association had been organized, and had already proven itself responsive

in many surprising ways. We had not believed that its varying elements could make common cause so readily. And, now, Christmas was approaching, supreme season of festival and celebration. What should we do to commemorate it, we whose very foundations were brotherhood, community of interests, fellowship and goodwill?

"Back of us were three church societies, Congregational, Episcopal and Catholic. Upon these and upon their membership, as well as upon those from outside, we drew heavily, as we drew upon the people of many vocations and many nationalities. We conceived a festival, universal in nature, such as would represent all, reach all; such as, above all else, would be expressive of the great season it commemorated. We had an impulse away from the conventional surface manifestations toward the wonderful reality of the miracle of miracles—toward the creation of the Manger at Bethlehem, the transfigured Mother, the pondering Joseph, the stars, the shepherds, the Glory of the Lord, the Heavenly Host! But we did not approach the undertaking without trepidation. With material so

heterogenious, *could* we maintain the solemnity of our subject, so sacred in itself, so wrapt around with centuries of mystical beauty?

"The event proved that faith in our people, however great, was still less than their due. Nothing more beautiful has come out of the play, year after year, than the devout spirit of our young actors. Our shepherds, year after year have been girls in their teens. Our wise men were, on the first year a Frenchman, a Moor, and a native New Englander: by trade they were a plumber, a day laborer, and the village postmaster and store keeper. Joseph was a young Italian workman, and Mary was an Irish girl. Laddie, a noble Collie dog accompanied the shepherds and played his part with perfect intelligence and feeling. When he died on the following year, he was mourned far and wide as the 'dog who came with the shepherds to see the Babe in the manger.' The retinue of the Magi are always school boys, as full of life and the spirit of mischief as the average boy. Of recent years, a gifted young Pomfret dancer whose name is beginning to be heard in some of the larger cities, has played the

part of the Angel of the Lord. She participates in the Nativity with the same spirit of reverence as do the others, although so great is her art that a pious little old lady, on seeing her dance recently exclaimed: 'Such beauty certainly draws one closer to God!'

"There is something in human nature," this Pomfret writer adds, "which is touched by the simple Miracle, and which responds with all of the simplicity of the heart of a child." That is why actors as well as audience are filled with wrapt solemnity. That is why they move through their parts, their eyes filled with suppressed tears. That is how, year after year the play has grown not by deliberate additions but through the splendid and growing conviction on the part of the actors of the truth they present. There is a profound gravity, an unstudied dignity that defies all description in their assumption of their parts, a conviction before which even the haughtiest bows down in humility. And because these artist spirits and all of the people who draw sanity and strength and spiritual inspiration from the free open stretches of the soil, have kept the ideal

of beautiful simplicity, the play is as much a service and as little a "show" as on the day it was inaugurated.

Now, as in the beginning, the play is enacted from start to finish without announcement or dialogue of any kind. It is simply accompanied by narrative music played upon a primitive little reed organ. The stage and the hall are prepared for the event by communal endeavor. The lighting has been rearranged recently by the head of the local trade school, who is the present Joseph of the production. The manger has been made from rough-hewn slabs by a Swedish carpenter with the spirit of worship in his heart. The Pomfret producers have generously outlined a description of their costumes which, from the first, have been an unparalleled triumph of artistic effectiveness and utter simplicity, and have been made, for the most part, without expense (see appendix). "We want more than anything else," is their dictum, "to communicate all that we have found out in ten years, and to urge the whole world to go and do the same thing—precisely as we have done it, unless they can do better."

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

First, and last, and always, those who have been most instrumental in shaping the destinies of the Pomfret *Nativity* are insistent in emphasizing the fact (glorious fact for the future of American community life) that they have done nothing but foster and encourage the spirit which they found waiting and eager to be utilized.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

The spiritual life of a time is depicted with inescapable exactness in its artistry. A spiritual movement that does not find expression in the arts cannot attain self-consciousness, dominance, or survival. An age or a people that does not reach any self realization or any unity of thought and feeling that breaks into artistic expression, is nondescript.

—Rev. Von Ogden Vogt.

IT is not only in Pomfret, Connecticut that there is to be found this new desire for self expression, waiting and eager to be utilized. Careful observation of social tendencies in large cities, in small towns and in rural communities all over the country during these past few years unmistakably reveals the fact that the young people in all walks of life,—social, industrial, professional, have turned instinctively to finding, in their leisure hours, release from the too-fixed routine of modern life. No longer do they

contentedly "ply the vast looms of songless labor": no longer do they thoughtlessly while away the listless hours of songless idleness. It is impossible to go about over the country and into the places where people work and play without feeling that the Soul of the People is aspiring to find a new common Voice—and toward new common ends. It is because this is true that the church center dramatic group is endowed with such high potentialities.

The value of drama in religious education is great. The value of the drama in "making the message of the church more vivid" is also great. But the true greatness of the church dramatic organization, lies, we believe, in the fact that drama is a true art form—the one art form, perhaps, through which the stirring impulses of the young people of the country may become crystallized into a "conscious unity of thought and feeling"—may find expression as an "objective and ponderable form of new beauty."

What more splendid thing could happen than that every church—where virtually every facility is already at hand—should foster a thoroughly organized "little" theater under wise director-

ship to the end that all of this spiritual energy which is seeking vaguely to find channels of expression should be focussed and concentrated into such programs as would enrich the cultural life of the entire community! At the same time it would enrich and beautify the church service and reintroduce into it that element of beauty so long absent, so tangible, but so certain "in its appeal to the human spirit." Life itself would take on a greater sacramental significance, and new elements of ritualistic beauty would find place in the ceremonies of ordinary life as well as those of worship. It would be the choosing of the one surest path back to the place where organized religious life and spiritual life would again come more nearly synonymous.

The conscious shaping of the drama and the utilization of it in the service of the church's educational activities is only one of the smallest functions of the drama in religious service. Somehow, in ways which we do not fully realize, these church basement groups already launched upon dramatic programs are going to have their strong influence upon our more practical Democracy of to-morrow. Ten years, even five years—

even a year of the right sort of effort in the experimental theater of which we have been speaking cannot fail to have a regenerating influence upon the social, artistic, and spiritual life of the community. This influence will extend in many directions and find expression through a variety of means.

Already, in hundreds and thousands of American communities, choral societies of almost professional excellence have been formed as a part of church social programs, or community or municipal organization activities. More are constantly being formed, and are, in turn, fostering an appreciation of the world's best sacred music, through selections played in public parks, in city auditoriums, in churches on Sunday afternoons and evenings and on special holidays. The musical organization is always a powerful ally of the dramatic group not only in the practical building up of season programs, but in the fostering of a strong group spirit among participants and spectators. It aids in education for communal activities and communal self expression. The strong natural affinity between the two cannot fail to result in a revival of the religious fes-

tival when the dramatic group has had time to grow.

We may even in the future develop great religious operas, and new sorts of cyclic miracle plays which shall incorporate those "materials already the property of popular consciousness, familiar in plot, character and sentiment, and transmitted as articles of belief for centuries" in terms of our present day interpretation.

Constant experimentation in the symbolic use of color and light, too, can but make a valuable contribution to the new synthesis of religious arts. Mr. Claude Bragdon has already equipped one New York church with a lighting system, which, by a constant play of almost imperceptibly changing colors embellishes and beautifies the service. Mr. Bragdon is a well known architect and writer, as well as an experimenter in the "art of light as an abstract language of thought and emotion which should speak to consciousness through the eye as music speaks through the ear." Another one of the country's greatest experimenters in color and light, has turned his attention recently toward the lighting of symbolic religious pag-

eantry. The scenes are transformed into spectacles of bewildering beauty by constantly moving patterns of light, cast prism-like across them.

We can but believe that the drama will again emerge from the church door, as in the Middle Ages. It will go out enriched by all of these things. But it will not pass from the sanction of the church. Wherever church drama has developed the tendency has also developed toward the broader and more inclusive programs,—the interchurch, the communal from which the church group returns always with worthwhile experience. With the ideal development, each church in the community will contribute its part toward the big religious dramatic celebration which will be regularly held in some central place much as the *miracles* were held in the public squares in Medieval cities.

The religious play will be made to serve festival purposes by being set in a "framework of song and symbolic decoration." There will be a general expression of "joy in the Lord" by the participation of great audiences through song. There will be processions of little children and

adult choral processions with the celebration of ancient rites and customs in tableau, pantomine and music.

No one could have witnessed the open air Easter Service held at dawn in Central Park, New York City last year without seeing a vision of the one step further. The suffragan bishop of the Episcopal church presided. The official song leader of the Federation of Churches led the carol singing. A Presbyterian minister gave a short address. Madame Louise Homer sang a solo. There was a chorus of trumpeters, who, in their flowing robes and against a leafy background, were suggestive of nothing so much as a frieze of Angels Victorious. Dr. Henry Van Dyke read his "God of the Outdoors" while the notes of the birds in the trees overhead continued uninterruptedly. The sun had risen only a little way, the dew was still wet on the grass when the last lingering notes of the trumpets were sounded, and the throngs went streaming down every walkway through the vast acreage.

What an occasion! What a scene! What a mass mood for great lay processionals and recessionals—for choruses of children from all of

the churches of a great city. What a setting for a beautiful, reverential pageant of the Resurrection morning! Similarly, that beautiful cross-crowned peak, Mt. Roubideaux, in California, where the country's first Easter sunrise service was held, and where thousands of people gather annually to worship on Easter morning,—provides a perfect setting for a great and impressive religious drama. Christmas and Easter caroling in almost every large city, and in many towns over the country, may well lead to dramatic celebrations on a large scale.

There are many signs of the spiritual awakening that is struggling to perpetuate itself in outward and visible form. All great art, as has been said many times, has grown out of new spiritual or religious impulses. But never has such art been a speedy or spontaneous thing; the growth is inevitably through a process of *work combined with faith*. Every church in the country, however small, however limited its facilities, may take an important place in this new movement which is so rich in promise as a new religious art and a new art of the people. It may do this by following, to the best of its ability, the old

familiar formula: *Doing what it can, with what it has, where it is.*

One of the country's best known religious dramatic leaders has said that there is no church that cannot put on a pageant, if that pageant be rightly selected and accompanied by adequate directions. There is wonderful revelation in working experimentally. The first step inevitably leads further, and it is through a program of constant activities that the really worth while things happen; the artisan becomes artist; the experimental work becomes art, and a fitting vehicle through which "spirit speaks to spirit."

Finally, it will be only the group that hangs back, is ultraconservative and lets old prejudices paralyze action, that will be unworthy. For the whole tendency of the times, as a great minister has but recently said, "is away from the set and stilted conventionalities of outworn Puritanical services, and toward the freer expression of spirituality."

APPENDIX A

SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS DRAMATIC MATERIAL*

The Educational Division, Department of Missions, Protestant Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York,—publishes the most complete and carefully prepared bibliography of religious dramatic material as yet available, under the title of "Descriptive List of Plays and Pageants for Parish Use."

The Pageants and Exhibits Division, of the Methodist Episcopal Church published a bibliography of "Plays and Pageants for Church and Parish House," which is available through the Abingden Press, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City, or through branch office in any large city. Costumes and curios for missionary programs as well as for costuming numbers of the listed plays may be rented from the Committee on Conservation and Advance of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Costume and Curio Branch, 740 Rush St., Chicago, Ills.) to whom inquiries may be sent.

The Woman's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., 156 Fifth Avenue, New York provides missionary and holiday dramatic material,

* All of these sources as well as numerous others have been consulted in the compilation of Bibliography.

which are fully catalogued in "Home Missions Publications, and How to Use Them,"—furnished on request.

The Baptist Board of Missionary Education, 276 Fifth Avenue, New York lists a limited number of missionary and religious educational plays and pageants. This Board owns the entire wardrobe of foreign costumes and flags taken over from the Inter-Church World Movement, and sends these out on a rental basis.

The Woman's Press, 600 Lexington Avenue, New York publishes a number of religious plays and pageants not elsewhere available. These are listed in the general catalogue. (The Woman's Press is the publication department of the Y. W. C. A.)

The Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren St. Chicago, Ills. has a special religious dramatic committee which will serve as information headquarters for Drama League members, furnishes a bibliography, and publishes material concerning religious dramatic development through the *Drama* magazine.

The Methodist Book Concern, 150, Fifth Avenue, New York is constantly developing new religious, educational, dramatic material which may be available in reprint form, or in back date copies of publications. *The Church School,* published at the same address, and devoted to Sunday School interests constantly prints fresh dramatic material for general and special purposes. Back date numbers are seldom available.

APPENDIX B

USEFUL REFERENCE BOOKS FOR THE AMATEUR PRODUCING GROUP

* Producing in Little Theaters, by Clarence Stratton—Henry Holt and Co. New York.

Practical Stage Directing for Amateurs, by Morrison Taylor, E. P. Dutton, New York.

* Costumes and Scenery for Amateurs, by Constance D'Arcy MacKay, Henry Holt and Co. New York.

Make-Up, by James Young, W. Witmark and Son, New York.

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* The Technique of Pageantry, by Linwood Taft, Ph. D., A. S. Barnes and Co. New York.

Practical Hints in Playwriting, by Agnes Platt, Dodd Mead and Co., New York.

* Pageants and Pageantry, by Esther Willard Bates, Ginn and Co., New York.

* Festivals and Plays, by Percival Chubb, Harper Bros., New York.

How to Produce Children's Plays, Constance D'Arcy MacKay, Henry Holt & Co. New York.

Pageantry and Dramatics in Religious Education, by Wm. V. Meredith, Abingden Press, New York.

* The Kingdom of the Child, by Alice Minnie Herts (Heniger), E. P. Dutton and Co. New York.

Educational Dramatics, Emma Sheridan Fry, Moffat, Yard and Co., New York.

Mission Study Through Educational Dramatics, Helen L. Wilcox, Missionary Education Movement, New York.

* The Dramatization of Bible Stories, by Elisabeth Ewin Miller, Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago Ills.

Community Drama, Community Service Inc., 1 Madison Ave., New York.

(On the Early History of Religious Drama)

English Religious Drama, by Katherine Lee Bates, Macmillan Co., New York.

Medieval Stage, Bk. 2, by E. K. Chambers, Clarenden Press, Oxford (out of print, but in all good libraries)

History of Theatrical Art, by Karl Mantzius, Duckworth & Co., London.

Plays of our Forefathers, by Charles Mills Gayley.

Reference for Students of Miracle Plays and Mysteries, by F. H. Stoddard, Library Bulletin No. 8, U. of Calif., Berkeley, Calif.

Modern Readers' Bible, edited by R. G. Moulton, Macmillan and Co., N. Y. (In story form, offers excellent material for dramatization).

Biblical Dramas, by Hale and Hall, Pilgrim Press, Boston, Mass.:

Joseph and his Brethren; Jacob; Moses, the Liberator; Samuel and Saul; David, the King; David and Jonathan; The Story of Solomon; the Story of Job; the Story of Elijah; the Messages of the Prophets; Nehimiah, the Builder; Paul, the Prisoner of the Lord.

APPENDICES

(These are not acting plays, but are the stories in dialogue form suitable for dramatic development by local groups).

Art and Religion, by Von Ogden Vogt, Yale Press, New Haven.

Use of Art in Religious Education, by Albert Edward Bailey, Abingden Press, New York.

[1] The Amateur Producing Group will find these books of particular value for reference in the various departments of production.

APPENDIX C

A LIST OF MUSIC SUITABLE FOR RELIGIOUS DRAMAS

(This list was prepared for the Drama League of America by a special committee consisting of Dean P. C. Lutkin, chairman, Mrs. Eugene H. Garnett, Prof. H. Augustine Smith, Mr. Osborne McConathy, Mr. Edgar B. Gordon and Mr. Carl M. Beecher. It is reprinted here by special permission.)

THE expressive power of music is frequently called upon to intensify dramatic situations. The proper selection of the music is a matter of good taste and experienced judgment. Hymns, with their flexibility as to length, are the simplest as well as the most practical musical accessory to religious pageants. They are easily performed by a single voice, a quartette of singers, or by an adult of children's chorus, as may be deemed best or most convenient. If the performers are invisible an air of remoteness and mystery is established which enhances materially the effectiveness of the music. In the case of familiar hymns, it is not always necessary that they be sung, for the mere performance on organ, piano or other instrument produces an atmosphere unattainable by other means. Another advantage of the use of hymns is the fact that they cover practically every conceivable religious emotion and can consequently be fitted to almost any situation or occasion.

The following list of hymns and tunes is suggestive only. Many are well known while the less known may possibly serve some peculiar need.

The first column of hymn numbers refers to the "New Hymnal" of the Protestant Episcopal Church recently published by the H. W. Gray Co., 2 West 45th St., New York City. The second column refers to the Methodist Hymnal published by the Methodist Book Concern, New York. Many of the hymns will be found in any standard church hymnal. The name of the desired tune, as it appears in the New Hymnal, is added.

An asterisk indicates that reference is made to the Deity only in the text.

Where a trained chorus, and skilled solo voices are available selections from standard oratorios or cantatas may be made with fine results. Some of these are appended as well as a list of instrumental numbers.

APPENDICES

MORNING

2	44	*Morning Hymn,*	Awake, my soul, and with the sun.
3		*Carman,*	Come, my soul, thou must be waking.
37	32	*Laudes Domini,*	When morning gilds the skies.

EVENING

17		*St. Columba,*	The sun is sinking fast.
* 18	50	*Eventide,*	Abide with me.
19	53	*Seymour or Mercy,*	Softly now the light of day.

LORD'S DAY

43	68	*Hodges or Mendebras,*	O day of rest and gladness.
50	38	*Ellers,*	Savior, again to thy dear name we raise.
51	39	*Sicilian Mariners or Eton,*	Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing.

ADVENT—JUDGMENT

55	116	*Stuttgart or Wilson,*	Come, thou long expected Jesus.
57	601	*St. Thomas (Novello),*	Lo, He comes with clouds descending.
62		*Sleepers, Wake,*	Wake, awake, for night is flying.
64		*Luther's Hymn,*	Great God, what do I hear and see?
66		*Veni Emanuel,*	O come, O come, Emanuel.

NATIVITY

71	115	*Winchester Old or Christmas.*	While shepherds watched.
72	125	*Adeste Fidelis (Portuguese Hymn),*	O come, all ye faithful.
73	111	*Mendelssohn,*	Hark! the herald angels sing.
78	121	*St. Louis,*	O little town of Bethlehem.
84		*St. Agnes,*	Calm on the listening ear of night.
545		*Stella,*	All my heart this night rejoices.
546	123	*Holy Night,*	Silent night, holy night.
551		*The First Nowell,*	The first Nowell the angels did say.
554		*Three Kings of Orient,*	We three kings of Orient are.
94		*Dix,*	As with gladness men of old.
95	114	*Morning Star,*	Brightest and best of the sons of the morning.
98		*Frankfort,*	How bright appears the morning star.

APPENDICES

SUFFERINGS AND DEATH

123		*Heinlein,*	Forty days and forty nights.
126	616	*St. Andrew of Crete,*	Christian! dost thou see then.
130	500	*Spanish Chant,*	Savior! when in dust to Thee.
132	282	*St. Hilda,*	O Jesus, Thou art standing.
135	443	*Federal Street,*	Jesus, and shall it ever be.
139	272	*St. Crispin or Dunstan,*	Just as I am.
143	31	*St. Theodulph,*	All glory, laud and honor.
145	150	*St. Drostane,*	Ride on, ride on in majesty.
148		*St. John,*	Behold the Lamb of God!
152	143	*Rathbun,*	In the cross of Christ I glory.
154	141	*Rockingham or Eucharist,*	When I survey the wondrous cross.
158	151	*Passion Choral,*	O sacred head surrounded.

RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

173		*Victory,*	The strife is o'er.
176		*St. Albinus,*	Jesus lives! thy terrors now.
185	169	*Coronae or Regent Square,*	Look, ye saints, the sight is glorious.
555		*O Filli et Filliae,*	O sons and daughters, let us sing.
556		*Puer Nobis,*	Joy dawned again on Easter day.
558		*Glory in the Highest,*	Easter flowers are blooming bright.
187		*Truro,*	Our Lord is risen from the dead.
190	179	*Diadem ata,*	Crown him with many crowns.
192	180	*Coronation or Miles' Lane,*	All hail the power of Jesus' name!

THE HOLY SPIRIT

199	189	*St. Cuthbert,*	Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed.
200	183	*St. Agnes or St. Martins,*	Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove.
	196	*Purleigh,*	Breathe on me, Breath of God.

TRINITY

205	78	*Nicae,*	Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God Almighty.
207		*Moultrie,*	Round the Lord in glory seated.
209	2	*Moscow (Italian Hymn),*	Come, Thou almighty King.

FAITH AND ZEAL

85	416	*All Saints or Cutler,*	The Son of God goes forth to war.
*111	396	*Christmas,*	Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve.

112		*Fortitude,*	Breast the waves, Christian.
113	409	*Pentecost,*	Fight the good fight.
114	623	*Amsterdam,*	Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings.
117		*St. Dunstan's,*	He who would valiant be.
211	334	*Olivet,*	My faith looks up to Thee.
212	461	*Adeste Fideles (Portuguese Hymn),*	How firm a foundation.
213	101	*Ein' Feste Burg,*	A mighty Fortress is our Lord.
217	279	*Toplady,*	Rock of ages, cleft for me.
222	315	*Bethany,*	Nearer, my God to Thee.
223	463	*Hollingside,*	Jesus, Lover of my Soul.

CONSECRATION

453		*Missionary Chant,*	Ye Christian heralds, go proclaim.
455		*Come, Holy Ghost,*	Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire.
463	207	*Aurelia,*	The Church's one foundation.
466		*National Hymn,*	Rose, crowned with light.
468	210	*Austria, (Hayden),*	Glorious things of thee are spoken.

PRAISE AND ADORATION

*249	16	*Old Hundred,*	All people that on earth do dwell.
253	4	*Leoni,*	The God of Abraham praise.
255	106	*Hanover or Lyons,*	O worship the King.
257		*St. Bees,*	Sing, my soul, His wondrous love.
265		*Alleluia Perenne,*	Sing Alleluia forth in duteous praise.
266		*Vigili et Sancti,*	Ye watchers, and ye holy ones.

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

120	543	*Rest (Elton),*	Dear Lord and Father of mankind.
386	293	*Stephanos or Bullinger,*	Art thou weary, are thou languid.
387	295	*Come unto Me or Savoy Chapel,*	Come unto Me, ye weary.
391	521	*Troyte or Hanford,*	My God; my Father while I stray.
445	*577	*St. Anne,*	O God, our help in ages past.
409		*St. Prisca,*	When our heads are bowed with woe.
*412	744	*Crossing the Bar,*	Sunset and evening star.

DIVINE LOVE AND GUIDANCE

226	355	*Love Divine or Weston,*	Love divine, all loves excelling.
232	137	*St. Peter or Holy Cross,*	How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds.

240	98	*Beecher or Wellesley,*	There's a wideness in God's mercy.
242	304	*Vox Dilecti,*	I heard the voice of Jesus say.
*244	460	*Lux Benigna,*	Lead, kindly Light.
245	489	*Aughton or He Leadeth Me,*	He leadeth me! O blessed thought.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

324		*St. Agnes,*	Shepherd of souls, refresh and bless.
326	136	*Dominus Regit Me,*	The King of love my Shepherd is.
333		*Unde et Memores,*	And now, O Father, mindful of the love.
339		*Picardy,*	Let all mortal flesh keep silence.

BAPTISM

343		*Evening Prayer,*	Saviour, Who Thy flock art feeding.
346		*Silver Street,*	Soldiers of Christ, arise.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

350	682	*St. Luke (Athens),*	I think when I read that sweet story of old.
353		*Children's voices,*	Above the clear blue sky.
355	677	*Sicilian Mariners or Bradbury,*	Saviour, like a shepherd lead us.
360		*Brocklesbury,*	Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me.
364	59	*Merrial,*	Now the day is over.

THE FAMILY

382	668	*Perfect Love,*	O perfect love.

THANKSGIVING

*420		*Dix,*	Praise to God, immortal praise.
*421	717	*St. George's Windsor,*	Come, ye thankful people, come.
*422	30	*Deo Gratias (Nun Danket).*	Now thank we all our God

NATIONAL DAYS

*430	704	*National Hymn,*	God of our Father, Whose almighty Hand.
433		*Ton-y Botel,*	Once to every man and nation.
*441	415	*St. Finbar (St. Catherine),*	Faith of our fathers.

APPENDICES

MISSIONS

99	650	*Zoan or Ellacombe,*	Hail to the Lord's Anointed.
			Watchman, tell us of the night.
106	636	*Watchman,*	O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling.
474	654	*Tidings,*	
476	655	*Missionary Hymn,*	From Greenland's icy mountains.
479	653	*Webb,*	The morning light is breaking.
480	631	*Duke Street,*	Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
482	639	*Waltham (Doane),*	Fling out the banner.

BROTHERHOOD AND SERVICE

489	556	*Boylston or Dennis,*	Blest be the tie that binds.
493	411	*Maryton,*	O Master let me walk with Thee.
494	423	*Gardiner (Germany),*	Where cross the crowded ways of life.
*502	410	*Holley or Gratitude,*	Lord, speak to me that I may speak.

CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

295	430	*Sarum,*	For all the saints who from their labors rest.
*508		*Oriel,*	Blessed city, heavenly Salem.
510	610	*Materna,*	O mother dear, Jerusalem.
511	612	*Ewing,*	Jerusalem the golden.
515		*Beulah,*	There is a blessed home.

PROCESSIONALS

519	76	*Ancient of Days,*	Ancient of Days, Who sittest throned in glory.
526		*Waterworth,*	O Saviour, precious Saviour.
529	681	*Sion or St. Theresa,*	Brightly gleams our banner.
530	383	*St. Gertrude,*	Onward, Christian soldiers.
532		*Hermas,*	On our way rejoicing.
533	418	*To Victory, (The Good Fight),*	We march, we march to victory.
541	618	*Alford,*	Ten thousand times ten thousand.

Selections from Oratories and Cantatas

MESSIAH, *Handel*

CHORUS: And the glory of the Lord.
ALTO SOLO AND CHORUS: O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion.
SOPRANO SOLO: There were shepherds abiding in the fields.
CHORUS: Glory to God in the highest.
SOPRANO SOLO: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
ALTO SOLO: He will feed His flock.
SOPRANO SOLO: Come unto Him.
CHORUS: Surely He hath borne our griefs.
CHORUS: Lift up your heads, O ye gates.

SOPRANO SOLO: I know that my Redeemer liveth.
CHORUS: Hallelujah.

JUDAS MACCABEUS, *Handel*
See the Conquering Hero comes.

CREATION, *Haydn*
CHORUS: The heavens are telling the glory of God.
SOLO: With verdure clad the fields appear.
CHORUS: Achieved is the glorious work.

ELIJAH, *Mendelssohn*
TENOR SOLO: If with all your hearts ye truly seek me.
CHORUS: Cast thy burden upon the Lord.
CHORUS: Thanks be to God, He laveth the thirsty land.
ALTO SOLO: O rest in the Lord.
TRIO: Lift thine eyes.
CHORUS: He, watching over Israel.

GOLDEN LEGEND, *Sullivan*
CHORUS: O, gladsome Light.
CHORUS: God sent His messenger the rain.

DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS. *Stainer*
CHORUS: God so loved the world.

CHORUS, *Beethoven*
The Heavens Resound.

CHORALES, *Bach*

[The above suggestions indicate the many possibilities which exist for suitable music. The subjoined list of oratorios and cantatas contains solo, chorus and instrumental material which may be useful on occasion.]

Published by NOVELLO & CO., London. H. W. GRAY CO., Agents, New York.

Andrews, Galilee.
Barnby, Rebekah.
Beethoven, The Mount of Olives.
Buck, The Light of Asia.
Coleridge-Taylor, The Atonement.
Cowen, Ruth. St. John's Eve.
Gade, Christmas Eve. The Crusaders. Zion.
Gaul, Israel in the Wilderness. Joan of Arc. The Holy City. The Ten Virgins.
Gounod, St. Ceceila Mass. Daughters of Jerusalem. Gallia. Mors et Vita. The Redemption.
Haydn, Imperial Mass.
Parker, H. W., The Passion. The Dream of Mary.
Mozart, Twelfth Mass.
Rossini, Stabat Mater.
Schubert, The Song of Miriam.
Stainer, St. Mary Magdalen. The Crucifixion. The Daughter of Jairus.

Published by the BOSTON MUSIC CO., Boston.

Huhn, Praise Jehovah.
Dvorak, 149th Psalm.

Strube, Gethsemane.
Wolf, Christmas Night.
Abt, Christmas (Women's Voices).
Bullard, The Nativity.
Knight, The Christchild.
Loepke, The Prince of Life.
Malling, The Holy Land.

Published by the G. SCHIRMER CO., New York.

Breuer, The Holy Night.
Buck, The Coming of the King. The Story of the Cross. The Triumph of David. Christ the Victor.
Bullard, The Holy Infant. The Resurrection. The Song of Songs.
Coombs, The Ancient of Days. The First Christmas. Hymn of Peace. The Sorrow of Death. The Vision of St. John.
Costa, Eli.
Dubois, Paradise Lost.
Garrett, Harvest Cantata.
Gaul, Ruth.
Gilchrist, An Easter Idyl. Prayer & Praise. 46th Psalm.
Goetz, 137th Psalm.
Harker, The Cross. The Star of Bethlehem.
Hiller, A Song of Victory.
Lachner, 100th Psalm.
Lemare, The Spirit of the Lord.
Marzo, The Kingdom of Christ.
Massenet, Eve. Mary Magdalen.
Matthews, The Conversion. The Life Everlasting. The Story of Christmas.
Mercadante, The Seven Last Words.
Parker, H. W., The Holy Child.

Rogers, The Man of Nazareth.
Saint-Saens, Christmas Oratorio. The Deluge. 150th Psalm.
Shelley, Death and Life. The Inheritance Divine. The Pilgrims. The Soul Triumphant.
Shepard, The Sermon on the Mount. The Word made Flesh.
Smith, D. S., God our Life.
Sullivan, The Light of the World. The Prodigal Son.
Woodman, The Message of the Star. The Way of Penitence.

Published by the OLIVER DITSON CO., Boston.

Ballard, The Ninety-first Psalm. Prayer and Praise.
Bennett, The Woman of Samaria.
Berge, The Shepherd's Vision.
Berwald, Christmas Tidings.
Borch, Easter-tide.
Chadwick, Joseph's Bondage.
Clough-Leighter, Christ Triumphant.
Lang, The Night of the Star.

Nevin, The Adoration.
Parker, J. C. D., Redemption Hymn.
Patten, Isaiah.
Reinecke, Evening Hymn.
Rogers, The New Life.
Rutenber, The Christ.
Schnecker, The Harvest is Ripe.
Spohr, God, Thou art Great.
Stanford, The Resurrection.
Stewart, Victory.

Published by J. FISCHER & BROS., New York.

Day, An Easter Cantata.
Dubois, The Seven Last Words of Christ.
Hartman, Seven Last Words.
Rheinberger, Stabat Mater.
Rhys-Herbert, Bethany.
Rhys-Herbert, The Nazarene.
Rhys-Herbert, The Christchild.

Published by A. P. SCHMIDT CO., Boston.

Herman, A Morning Psalm. Song of the Virgins (WOMEN'S VOICES).
Marston, David.
Paine, The Nativity.
Parker, (J. C. D.), St. John.
Schnecker, Lazarus, The Fatherhood of God.

Published by RICORDI, New York.

Burgmein, Christmas Morn.

Published by THEO. PRESSER CO., Philadelphia.

Berge, The Wondrous Cross.
Gillette, The Life Everlasting.
Neidlinger, Prayer, Promise and Praise.
Norris, Nain.
Wolcott, The Message Eternal.

Published by the MAXWELL MUSIC CO., New York.

Edwards, The Redeemer.

Instrumental Music

Handel, Pastoral Symphony from Messiah. March from Judas Maccabeus. Dead March from Saul.

Beethoven. Funeral March from Piano Sonata.
Mendelssohn, War March of the Priests. Wedding March. Funeral March from Songs without Words.
Chopin, Funeral March.
Meyerbeer, Coronation March.
Lemmens, Pontifical March.
Smart, Solemn March in G.
Haydn, Introduction to the Creation.
Gounod, Redemption, various selections.
Costa, Damascus Triumphal March.

Also instrumental excerpts from the various cantatas listed, such as the "March to Calvary" from *Stainer's* "Crucifixion," etc. Many choral numbers will also be found useful for instrumental performance alone, such as *Handel's* "Hallelujah Chorus," etc.

APPENDIX D

SOME MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON LOCAL PRODUCTIONS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

"THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY"

Dr. Eugene Rodman Shippen, of the Second Church in Boston, where this simple, yet deeply touching Christmas celebration has become an annual observance, has furnished the following Order of Service for those who feel the potentialities of art in worship and yet have not themselves arrived at the point of adapting the drama for noble religious uses:

Organ Prelude
Processional—"Adeste Fideles"
Prayer
Organ

The Prophecies. Reading: Isaiah xi. 1–6 and lxi 1–3

The Nativity. (Here the Holy Family enters the chancel preceded by the Heavenly Host which divides into two groups, and attended by an angel. Mary sits; Joseph stands; St. John kneels).

Visit of the shepherds who come down a side aisle to the chancel, kneel, present their gifts, and then stand at

one side. (Part of Pastoral Symphony from "The Messiah" is played as they approach).

The Adoration of the Kings. (The kings come down the main aisle following the action of the shepherds).

The Flight Into Egypt. (Joseph, head bent over his staff as if in a dream, wakes suddenly, touches Mary, and then, attended by the angels, retires front or rear according to church arrangement).

Christmas Carol, "The First Nowell."
Offertory.

The Light of the World. (Angel with large lighted candle takes central place. Apostles, one by one, light smaller candles from the central light, then stand in a line at the foot of the steps in front. The Disciples light their candles from the lights of the Apostles, and leave the church singing the old processional "Veni Emmanuel."

Benediction.
Organ Postlude.

"The small town church, given a leader possessing some church feeling and artistic taste, can successfully present the pageant," Dr. Shippen believes. "It is simple, and requires but few and simple properties. Only a background of evergreens is needed on platform or in chancel. For costumes, Oriental materials or dyed cheesecloth, or both may be used. Haloes and wings, if used, may be cut out of heavy cardboard and gilded or painted. Joseph wears a sapphire blue robe and carries a staff. Mary wears a sapphire blue robe and a white head veil, sur-

mounted by a halo. The Christ Child may be represented by a doll completely wrapped to give the outlines, a concealed light shining through the veiled draperies.

"Little St. John wears a leopard skin over his shoulders and carries a slim cross. The Heavenly Host (kindergarten children) are simply dressed in white not necessarily costumed except for garlands on their heads. The angels wearing rose-colored robes with gold stencilled borders may well be copied from Fra Angelico prints. The Kings, tall young men, richly robed, with or without crowns, bear as gifts a jewel casket, a censer, and a crown on a silken cushion. The Apostles (twelve in number) wear simple Oriental draperies, their stockings drawn over their shoes and bound with tape. The Disciples in numbers according to available young people or school children are dressed similarly. In every case, twisted turbans are used instead of wigs and beards. Emblems and colors for the historic Twelve may be used. See *Sacred and Legendary Art,*—Jameson; Vol. I—173-178)."

"NAHAMAN"

The Bible story of Nahaman, the leper, was dramatized and directed by Mr. Milton William Pullen, pastor of the Central Park Baptist Church, New York, where it was presented as one of the 1921–1922 Sermon-Dramas in three acts and seven scenes. Mr. Pullen's dramas have not been made available in published form as yet. But for the interest it will have for those concerned with Biblical plays adapted direct from the text, we have asked Mr. Pullen for a description of his method

in producing this play. He has given it as follows:

"The story has always interested me, and so it was with a feeling of satisfaction that I began its dramatization preparatory to its presentation as a Drama Sermon. The story as recorded in the Bible is, of course, so brief, that if the exact words of the Biblical narrative were used and nothing added, it would hardly take five minutes for the presentation. Furthermore, our chief interest throughout the story is as much for the little Hebrew maiden who shows Nahaman the way to healing and health as it is for Nahaman himself. We would like to know something of her life before she is carried away captive. Hence, I was prompted to write a dramatization that would contain the story of Naharnan exactly as it is found in Kings II, Chap. 5., but so enlarged and embellished by use of the imagination that it is interesting, uplifting and inspiring.

"I first read the story through a number of times, fixing in mind the minutest details Then I began my sermon with the little Hebrew maid in mind as the chief character and the main center of interest and inspiration. Since she was a "little maid," she must have been but a child when she was still in her father's house in her own land before captivity. Thus I show her through two scenes,—a good girl with God in her heart and life. She must have been so, else when she was carried away captive she would have forgotten God in a strange land.

. "The rest of the action is almost entirely carried out according to the Bible version except that I still use imagination in creating conversation, dialogue, etc. The language is Bibical throughout, and I try to use my imagination with judgment.

"The drama, in brief, portrays the little Hebrew maid at home in her father's house in Israel where there are rumors that the Syrians may come as they have come at other harvest seasons to steal the crops, kill the men and carry away the girls captive. The Syrians do come, kill the father, and carry Rachel away to Syria where she is rescued from the vicious soldiers by Nahaman, a captive and taken into his house as a slave. Here she discovers his disease and begs him to go to the 'Prophet that is in Samaria' for cure. He goes and is displeased at the prophet's command to him, but the little maid admonishes him, and he washes himself in the Jordan and is healed. He returns and would reward the prophet but is forbidden. When he is taking his departure for his homeland, Gehazi, the servant of the prophet overtakes him, and lies to receive the promised reward—whereupon the prophet appears and the curse of leprosy is placed upon the servant.

"The costumes, kingly and humble are typical of the times represented. The scenery, suggests rather than portrays the places where the scenes take place,—a palm tree here, a stone there. My young people delight in the presentation of the drama sermon and faithfully learn parts, rehearse, receive criticism, etc. I direct the production in every detail, costuming, setting, lighting and prompting."

"IN THE DAYS OF THE JUDGES"

This large scale pageant, written by Mrs. Annie Russell Marble of Worcester, Massachusetts, and produced in the Union church of that city under her direction, "was intended to portray in a few typical episodes from the

Hebrew histories the poem-picture of Ruth, and revelant psalms, the significant events and outstanding characters of the Jews during the period of the Judges." Their relapses from true loyalty and high ideals of religion and morals, their lapses into idolatries of various kinds, were related to present day history by the words of the Prologue and the readings by the Messenger. Biblical language was used throughout, with perfectly adapted narrative music, as indicated by the synopsis:

Prelude—War March of the Priests. Mendelssohn
Processional—"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty"
Invocation and Lord's Prayer
Prologue

EPISODE I

The recall of the Jews from Idolatry
Judges, Chaps. 1, 2, 3.

Dance of the Priestesses of Dagon
Chorus, "Great Dagon has subdued our foe" (Samson) Handel.
Chorus, "O sing unto the Lord, for He hath done marvelous things" Goss.

EPISODE II

Deborah, the Prophetess. Judges, Chaps, 4–6.
Chorus, "Jehovah, God o'er all the gods" (Judith) Chadwick.

EPISODE III

The Soldiers of Gideon. Judges VI.

Allegro from Fifth Concerto. Handel.
"The Trump of Israel is Sounding"
(Soldiers of Gideon) Saint-Saens

EPISODE IV

Ruth, the Moabitess. Book of Ruth.

Harvest March Calkin.
Solo—"Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee" Gounod.
Chorus—"Sing to the Lord of Harvest" Barnby.
Bridal March from "Rebekah" Barnby.

EPISODE V

Jephtha and his daughter. Judges, Chap. 2.

Overture to "Occasional Oratorio" Handel.
Tenor Solo, "Waft her, angels, to the skies" (Jephtha) Handel.

EPISODE VI

Samson and Delilah. Judges, Chap. 15-16.

Last Movement from Overture to "Samson" Handel.
Soprano solo, "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice,"
(Samson and Delilah) Saint-Saens.

OFFERTORY

EPISODE VII

Eli, Samson and Saul. 1 Samuel.

Scene 1

Interlude, Evening Meditation Scharwenka.

Soprano Solo, "I will Extol Thee, O Lord, (Eli) Costa.
Quartet, "Hushed was the Evening Hymn," Sullivan.

Scene 2

Coronation Anthem, "The King Shall Rejoice" Handel.
Recessional "Holy, Holy, Holy."
(The Congregation rises, singing the last stanza)

Benediction
Postlude—March Meyerbeer.

In the opening episode, a dance of the Priestesses of Dagon was introduced with great effectiveness—the wild frenzy of the maidens, with their idols, bringing down upon them the wrath of the faithful Israelites who frightened them and compelled them to renounce their objects of worship, was thus portrayed. A later dance was introduced in the Samson scene. "Although the pageant was produced on the pulpit of a dignified impressive church," Mrs. Marble says, "not one of the 1,400 spectators seemed to regard the dances with any feeling other than appreciation of their place in a strictly religious drama. The episode of Jephtha, and his daughter was extremely dramatic and pictorially beautiful. The daughter recited Byron's poem which provided artistic contrast to the musical selections and the martial features.

One of the most interesting things about this production was the manner in which leading men and women of Worcester, including doctors, lawyers, judges, and college professors, took part with the younger people.

APPENDICES

PASSION WEEK LIVING PICTURES

As a "Devout and beautiful way of commemorating the Passion of Our Lord," the Department of Fine Arts in Religion, of Boston University, demonstrated the production of Living Pictures "for the special interest of ministers, teachers, and officers in the Sunday Schools, choristers and dramatists, as well as lay workers in the religious field" during the past Lenten season. In addition to the six famous masterpieces which were posed by Miss Lois Bailey, stereopticon pictures of the Passion of Our Lord were shown, and commented on by Prof. Albert E. Bailey, and special Lenten music was provided. Because many churches have the facilities for working out a similar program if a good dramatic director is available, we give the order of the presentation:

LENTEN MEDITATION, ORGAN.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

EXPOSITION OF PRELL: The Corruption of Judas; given by Professor Bailey. Tableau, Prell: The Corruption of Judas.

HYMN: In the Hour of Trial. Stereopticon Pictures: Gebhardt's Last Supper; Da Vinci's Last Supper; Da Vinci's Head of Christ; Brown's Washing the Feet of the Disciples; a View of Gethsemane; an old olive tree. Tableau posed after Bacon's Christ in Gethsemane.

HYMN: 'Tis Midnight, and on Olive's Brow. Pictures: Hoffman's Christ in Gethsemane; Geiger's Kiss of Betrayal;

Van Dyck's Arrest.

HYMN: My Jesus, as Thou Wilt. Tableau: Peter's Denial.

HYMN: Jesus, and Shall It Ever Be? Pictures: Munkacsy's Christ Before Pilate; Munkacsy's Pilate; Ciseri's Ecce Homo; Reni's Ecce Homo.

HYMN: O Sacred Head Now Wounded. Pictures: Dore's Christ Leaving Pretorium; Thirsch's Via Dolorosa; Max's Veronica's Handkerchief; Munkacsy's Christ on Calvary. Tableau: Group at the Foot of the Cross.

MUSIC: Passions Chorale. Picture: Reubens' Crucifixion.

HYMN: Near the Cross Was Mary Weeping. Pictures: Bouguereau's Crucifixion; Fra Angelico's Crucifixion; Gerome's Golgotha; Carriere's Crucifixion; Fra Angelico's Details of Crucifixion.

HYMN: Jesus, Name Above All Names. Pictures: Titian's Deposition; Ciseri's Entombment; Piglhein's Entombment.

HYMN: Jesus Christ is Risen Today. Pictures: Thomson's Easter Dawn; Ender's Holy Women at the Tomb. Tableau: Ender's Holy Women.

HYMN: The Day of Resurrection. Pictures: Fra Angelico's Nolo Me Tangere; Von Uhde's Easter Morning.

MUSIC: I Know That My Redeemer Liveth. Tableau: Burne-Jones' Easter Dawn.

MUSIC: Still, Still With Thee. Pictures: Plockhorst's Walk to Emmaus; Rembrandt's Supper at Emmaus; Fra Angelico's Christ as Pilgrim.

ANTHEM: I'm a Pilgrim. Picture: Dollman's Anno Domini.

MUSIC: Hallelujah Chorus.

THE POMFRET NATIVITY

The Pomfret Nativity (Conn.) like the Christmas service in Dr. Shippen's church, in Boston and others,

is so simple that it may be reproduced by the church which has started dramatic activities. It is so fully described elsewhere that only the musical schedule need be given here. Christmas carols are begun without announcement, and follow each other without pause. Then, after one of the village ministers has read the Bible selections appropriate to the season, a soloist behind the scene sings Hayden's "Silent Night, Holy Night," and when the words have ceased, a humming chorus takes up the harmony, which is made continuous with the opening scene, now rising, now falling, blending into and giving place to embellishing organ music in each succeeding scene.

With the Annunciation scene (Luke i, 26–28) this music is "O Rest in the Lord," Mendelssohn. With the Shepherd scene, (St. Luke ii, 8–20), "He Shall Feed His Flock," from The Messiah, Handel; and with the entrance of the Angel, "Come Unto Me," from The Messiah; with the entrance of the Heavenly Host, "Rejoice, Rejoice, the Messiah!" In the Manger scene (St. Luke ii, 1–7), "Silent Night" rises to the gentle cadences of a cradle song. When the shepherds come to the manger, the organ notes swell into Handel's "He Shall Feed His Flock," from "The Messiah"; at the Adoration of the Magi (St. Mathew ii, 1–12), into Handel's "Largo"; and when the humble and the mighty guests have departed, and the angel comes to Joseph in his dream (St. Mathew ii, 13) the strains of Holy Night rise again, to give place to carols sung by a chorus behind the scenes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PLAYS SUITABLE TO THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

Adeste Fideles, by Marie E. J. Hobart, Churchman Co., New York. 50¢.

Christmas mystery, deeply religious in spirit—symbolic. 9 girls, 12 boys, shepherds according to young men available. Time: 40 minutes.

Bethlehem, from Adam's Dream and other Miracle Plays, by Alice Corbin Henderson (Scribner's, New York). This book is out of print but may be found in almost any library. A one act play, with the scene showing the inn to which Mary and Joseph came. Equally good for adults or children, 1 mother's part. 15 to 20 characters. Very poetic and beautiful. Full directions for staging. Time: 20 minutes.

Birds Christmas Carol, by Kate Douglas Wiggins, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York. 35¢.

Dramatic version of the well known story, in prologue and 3 acts. 17 characters. 3 men, 3 women, and the Ruggles children. 3 sets. Time: 2 hours. Special arrangements necessary for production. Address Miss A. Kausan, 1402 Broadway, New York.

Children's Christmas Dream, by Mary E. Telford, Abingden Press, New York. 25¢.

The Christmas Guest, by Constance D'arcy Mackaye,

Henry Holt and Co., New York in volume "The House of the Heart." $1.20.

One act. Complete instructions for costume and settings. 8 children, 3 males, 5 females. Medieval miracle in verse telling the story of a gift by children to a beggar who turned out to be the Christmas angel. Often produced in churches.

A Christmas Miracle Play, in one act. Adapted from an ancient *Miracle* by the Playhouse Ass'n. Summit, N. J. Cast 25 or less. Setting simple. Original music and full instructions included for lighting, producing, costuming and the arrangement of the auditorium. Time: 45 minutes. Deposit of $10 required. Address: Norman Lee Swartwout, Summit N. J.

A Christmas Miracle Play in one act. Adapted by Samuel Eliot from the Coventry Cycle. Skillful acting and setting required. 13 males, 1 female. No. 1 of *Little Theater Classics.* Drama League Bookshop, New York. $1.50.

A Christmas Pageant, by Rev. C. L. Bates, from "Seven Church Pageants" (Episcopal) for the important days of the church calendar. Parish Leaflet Co., Hobart, Ind. Single 5¢. Complete 25¢.

Beautiful and effective, suitable for presentation in church at the end of the service. 17 children, 18 young people. Time: 30 minutes.

The Cross Goes Westward, by C. H. Jarrett, Educational Division, Dept. of Missions, Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York. 10¢.

For Christmas or Easter entertainment. 8 scenes as follows:

St. Paul and the Centurion; Early Britons; English Settlers in America; Pioneers in the West; Slavery; Indians; Gold Mining in California; Eskimos. 25 speaking parts including 2, Jerusalem and America, which require older people. Any number of children may be on the stage as minor characters; a whole Sunday School may take part. 1 simple set. Full directions. Time: 1 hour.

Eagerheart, A. M. Buckton, Chappell, Ltd., New York. 75¢.

A mystery play of beauty and worth, requiring some skill in production. May be played in the chancel with one draped scene and change of properties between acts. 11 males, 2 females, several extras. Time: 1½ hours. Often produced in churches. Royalty $5. This sometimes is waived. For permission to produce, address Pres't of the New York Assn. of Eagerheart, Mrs. E. D. Klots, 125 West 78 Street, N. Y. C.

The Evergreen Tree, by Percy Mackaye, John Church Co., Music, $1.50 Text, 50¢.

2 Exteriors. Has been given in churches with simple draped set. May be produced either simply or elaborately. 25 males, 4 females.

Garments of Praise, by Florence Converse, E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y. $2.

A cycle of 4 miracle plays for Christmas, Easter, Whitsuntide and All Saints' Day.

The Greatest Gift, by Katherine Lord, Abingden Press, New York. Printed in "The Little Playbook." $1.50.

3 scenes. Two Sets required. 50 or more characters,

at least 19 of whom should be children. Can be played entirely by children. How a tenement house family finds that the greatest Christmas gift is love and neighborliness. Time: 45 minutes.

The Nativity, by Leonora Ashton, Young Churchman Co., Milwaukee, Wis. 5¢.

Christmas mystery suitable for church production. Beautiful, Religious in feeling. 10 characters and chorus. Time: 1½ hours.

The Nativity and Adoration Cycle of the Chester Mysteries. Edited by Frank Conroy, Egmont Arens, Washington Square Book Shop, N. Y. 35¢.

Require some adaptation to church production, expert direction and good acting. All plays in Old English.

The Nativity, by Rosamond Kimball, Samuel French, New York. 35¢.

Originally designed for young people, but may be played by adults. 9 males, 2 females. At least 20 angels. 1 draped interior with changing properties. Tells the story of the Nativity through tableaux accompanied by carols and hymns sung by the congregation. Complete directions and musical guide included. Beautiful for church production. Time: 1 hour.

Star of Bethlehem, by Frances C. Barney, Educational Div'n Dept. of Missions, Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York. 5¢.

A very simple missionary play for Christmas, for children. 6 boys, 6 girls. Children of the white races sent by the Angel of the Star find and bring to the Star children of the foreign lands. One simple setting. Time: 30 minutes.

The Spirit of Christmas, by Jane Dansfield, Norman Lee Swartwout, Summit, N. J., manuscript only. Deposit, $5.

An entertainment for schools and churches, consisting of a story read off stage with musical accompaniment, illustrated by 6 tableaux. A child dreams that, led by an angel, she visits other lands on Christmas morning and finds the true spirit of love everywhere. Has been very effectively produced in churches. Simple to produce. Full directions.

The Spirit of Christmas, by Grace E. Craig, Woman's Press, New York. 45¢.

Simple Christmas play, for basement stage or parish hall. Easy to produce. 16 characters and extras. Time: 40 minutes. Royalty $2.

The Waif, by Elizabeth Grimball, Woman's Press, New York. 35¢.

Modern Morality. Beautiful. Simple. Often and successfully produced. Seven principals, numerous extras. Time: 30 minutes. Royalty $2.

Why the Chimes Rang, by Elizabeth McFadden, Samuel French, New York. 35¢.

4 males, 4 females, from 20 to 50 extra characters. 2 interior scenes, one in a peasant's home, the other the cathedral interior. Full directions for staging and costuming. Royalty $5; $10 if admission is charged.

When the Star Shone, by Rev. Lyman R. Bayard, Pageant Pub. Co., 1206 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, California. 50¢.

A very elaborate and beautiful pageant, successfully given in churches all over the country. Used as the

demonstration production in the Boston Community Service School of Religious Drama. Full directions for producing at small expense. Time: 2 hours.

EASTER PLAYS

The Chalice and the Cup, by Mary S. Edgar, Woman's Press, New York. 35¢.

A vesper service for Easter season. The Church tells the story of Good Friday, Easter Day and the Cross of Love, and appeals for service, to the Association spirit (Y. W. C. A.) The spirit of the Parish may be substituted if desired. 3 main characters, any number of young people as extras. Simple. Effective. Time: 30 minutes.

The Children's Crusade, by Juliana Conover, Church Missions Pub. Co., Hartford Conn. 15¢.

A two act Easter play of the 11th. century. 15 boys, 8 girls, a group of mothers, and children and a choir behind the scenes. Can be given outdoors Full directions for costumes. Time: 1 hour.

The Cross Goes Westward, listed under Christmas plays.

The Dawning, by Rev. Lyman R. Bayard, Pageant Pub. Co., 1206 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, Calif. 50¢.

A companion pageant to "When the Star Shone." Widely and successfully produced in churches. Large cast. Dialogue interspersed with song. Easy and inexpensive to produce. Full directions. Time: 2½ hours.

Easter Pageant, from Seven Church Pageants, described under Christmas plays. 22 young men and women. 45 minutes to 1½ hours.

He is the Son of God, by Linwood Taft, Drama League of America, 59 E. Van Buren Street, Chicago, Ill. Typed form, $3.

Drama League prize play. A play for Holy Week showing the effects of the miracles and the personality of Christ upon a Jewish woman of orthodox training. Excellent for church production.

How the Light Came, by Rev. F. D. Graves, Church Missions Pub. Co., Hartford Conn. 30¢.

A beautiful mystery for a church service. Requires careful production. 18 adult characters and a procession of children. Time: 45 minutes.

Darkness and Dawn. An Easter mystery play, by Frederica LeFevre Bellamy, Educational Div'n. Dept. of Missions, Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Ave., New York. 50¢.

16 characters. May be produced in the church or on basement stage. Very effective. Full directions included, Royalty $2.

The Resurrection, by Leonora S. Ashton, Morehouse Pub. Co., Milwaukee, Wis. 5¢.

An effective Easter mystery suitable for church production. 9 men, 3 women. Time: 1½ hours.

The Resurrection, Rosamond Kimball, Samuel French, New York. 35¢.

Companion to the *Nativity.* One of the best known of all religious dramatic services. Composed of selections from the Bible arranged in dramatic form on the plan of

a mystery play. It pictures the incidents of the gospel story of the Resurrection and is accompanied by Bach's Passion Music and by Easter carols. Simple to produce. 11 men, 5 women and reader. Complete instructions included. Time: 1½ hours.

Thy Kingdom Come, printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* March 1921. Also in "Garments of Praise" listed under Christmas plays.

Why Didn't You Tell? By Anita B. Ferris, Missionary Education Movement, New York. 15¢.

An Easter play for children, 5 to 10 years of age. Nature's children try to tell the little foreigners of Christ's love, and when they cannot succeed, the Christian child tries and succeeds. 30 or more characters. Time: 30 minutes.

Youth's Easter, by Helen L. Wilcox Missionary Education Movement, New York. 25¢.

An Easter Morality in which Youth accepts Hope and Love for his companions. Large cast, may include entire Sunday School. 16 speaking parts. Complete directions for costuming and staging. Special music included with play. Time 35 mins.

THANKSGIVING PLAYS

Faith of Our Fathers, by Annie Russell Marble, Community Service, Inc., 1 Madison Avenue, New York. 25¢.

A symbolic Pilgrimage play, with a large number of both historic and symbolic characters written to commemorate the Pilgrim's Tercentennial. Full of beautiful re-

ligious feeling. Suitable for Thanksgiving celebration, basement stage or parish hall.

The Minister's Dream, by Katherine Lord, Abingdon Press, New York.

A Thanksgiving Fantasy. Two scenes, one setting. Colonial and Indian costumes. 25 or more persons. Excellent as Sunday School entertainment. Included in "The Little Playbook," price $1.50.

A Masque of Thanksgiving, by Rosamond Kimball, Woman's Press, New York 35¢.

Suitable for production by a young woman's group of the church. Young America is seen to grow from untamed girlhood (in the days of the Indian and the Puritan) to the ripe womanhood of to-day. Simple to produce. Effective. Royalty $5.

Pageant of Pilgrims, by Esther Willard Bates, Abingdon Press, New York 75¢.

Prologue, 3 episodes and epilogue. 110 or more characters. The Episodes represent 1, the decision of the Pilgrims to leave Scrooby; 2, The Landing of the Pilgrims; and 3, the First Thanksgiving. Expert direction is needed. Otherwise simple. Time: 1 hour. Royalty $10.

MISSIONARY PLAYS

A Beginning, by E. M. James, Church Missions Pub. Co., Hartford, Conn. 10¢.

A little play in which a group of children, careless though religious, are made to realize the need of real earnestness in their religious life through a vision seen by one of the mothers, of children from the church mis-

sions fields. 26 characters. Settings: 2 interiors. Time 1¼ hours.

The Blue Cashmere Gown, by Sarah S. Pratt, Church Mission's Pub. Co., Hartford Conn. 15¢.

A very human little story of a dress sent in a missionary box. Four scenes. Two settings. Staging simple. 13 persons. Time: 30 minutes.

Children of the Shadow, by Lydia Isely Wellman, Abingdon Press, New York, 15¢.

A touching story of conflict between the traditional and the Christian ideas of marriage in the heart of Africa. 3 acts. 18 characters, all African except the missionary and his wife. Simple to produce. Full directions, illustrated. Time: 1½ hours.

Conquerors of the Continent, by Alice Gwendoline Alhe, Church Missions Pub. Co., Hartford, Conn. 10¢.

A pageant of the progress of the church in America. Suitable for presentation in any church if desired. The episodes include, The founding of the church in America (Episcopal); the church's first mission; her work continued in the West; in the Far West; in Alaska. 9 boys, 3 girls. No scenery. Suitable for outdoor production. Time: 1 hour.

The Cross Goes Westward, listed under Christmas plays.

Dinah, Queen of the Berbers, by Clarice V. McCauley, Abingden Press, New York. 50¢.

A dramatic story of great religious and historic significance, dealing with the fall of Christianity in Algeria, North Africa in the Seventh Century. Not difficult to

produce but principal characters must be carefully chosen. 11 principal characters. As many extras as desired. Full directions. Time: 1 hour.

Dramatic Sketches of Mission Fields, by Helen L. Willcox, Dept. of Missionary Education, Baptist Board of Education, 276 Fifth Avenue, N. Y.
12 Sketches and an introductory pamphlet, $1.30, each 15¢.

Go Tell, listed under Easter Plays.

The Little Pilgrim and the Book Beloved, by Marie E. J. Hobart, Educational Division, Dept. of Missions, Protestant Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York. 35¢.

A beautiful little play, said to be the first religious dramatization seriously to turn the attention of church people to the possibilities of drama in religious education of children. Very reverent and impressive for juniors 10 to 16. Based upon the Prayer Book as showing the complete Christian faith to the non-Christian world. 30 or more characters.

The Hour of Waking, by Marian Manley, Abingdon Press, New York. 25¢.

Pictures with striking symbolism the binding of ancient China by the Spirit of Stagnation; the modern awakening of the great sleeping giant by the forces of Freedom and Progress, and the need of Christian guidance in this hour of crisis. One scene. Full directions. 55 persons. Time: 1 hour.

Kanjundu, or Fear from the Enemy, by Helen L. Willcox, Abingden Press, New York. 25¢.

The waning of the witch doctor's spell in Africa under Christian influence. Three acts. 20 to 25 persons. Plays 1 hour.

Larola, by Helen L. Willcox, Abingdon Press, New York. 25¢.

The pathetic story of a Hindu woman condemned to widowhood upon her husband's conversion to Christianity. 1 Act. 8 persons. Time: 50 minutes.

Mother Church and Her Juniors, Educational Div'n, Department of Missions, Protestant Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Avenue, New York.

A simple play for juniors (Church School Service League, or other body) setting forth the purpose of the organization—which may be adapted to fit local requirements—and showing some of the results of their work. Some of their foreign brothers and sisters appear and tell the story. No scenery. 9 characters. Time: 20 minutes.

A Mock Trial, Heathen Nations vs. American Christian, by Anna E. Deal, Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, New York, 10¢.

The Grand Jury of the State of Heathendom accuses the American Christian with the crime of Neglect. Clever play with good opportunity for attractive contrast in the variety of foreign costumes. May be changed to be descriptive of work in the mission fields of any church. For young people or adults. About 22. Scene, a court room. Time: 30 minutes.

Plea for Pennies, by Gretchen Green, Church Missions Pub. Co., Hartford, Conn. 15¢.

Very effective. A little boy and girl are retaught the

missionary spirit by means of dream pictures. 14 tableaux. 7 girls appear as Spirit of the Missions and people of the tableaux. Simple setting. Time 1½ hours.

Pill Bottle, Margaret T. Applegarth, Abingdon Press, New York. 15¢.

A medical missionary play. 24 persons. 4 scenes. 3 sets. A modern college girl intends to become an interior decorator but a visit to her missionary parents in India results in her decision to become a doctor. Time: 1 hour.

The Seeker, by Clarice Valette McCauley, Methodist Book Concern, New York. 75¢.

An elaborate pageant, symbolic and very dramatic but difficult to produce effectively. Portrays Humanity's universal search for God, and the end of the quest in Christianity. 90 persons including 12 speaking parts. Suggestive notes on scenery included, also original music. Brocure: "How to Produce the Seeker," 25¢. extra. 1½ hours or more.

Spirit of the Fathers, by Anita B. Ferris, Methodist Book Concern, New York. 25¢.

Story of the development of the Missionary enterprise in the Methodist church. It consists of an initial tableau which gives the theme, an allegorical prelude, four historical Home missions episodes, an allegorical interlude, four episodes of modern work in foreign fields, and an allegorical masque of the nations with a final processional, of all participants. It is a church community pageant and can best be given by several churches co-operating. Brochure, "How to give the pageant," free. The Committee on Conservation and Advance

will provide costumes for this pageant under certain conditions, and will also undertake to supervise (from headquarters) the production of the pageant, furnishing and transporting costumes, scenery, literature, etc. for a fixed sum.

GENERAL

Abraham and Isaac, a Medieval *Brome,* dating probably to 1470. Beautiful but suited only to the experienced group with a high art standard, and a feeling for the Medieval spirit of production. Characters, Abraham, Isaac, the Angel, the Doctor, and the Voice of God. Effective if developed with elaborate choruses. Text in *Everyman and Other Early Plays,* Houghton Mifflin and Co., New York. $1.

Bible Plays for Children, Mae Stein Sobel, Jas. T. White and Co., New York. $1.50.

Dramatizations of six well-known Bible stories,—Adam and Eve; Moses in the Bullrushes; Moses, the Shepherd; the Golden Calf; the Promised Land; and David and Goliath. Short, simple, excellent for Sunday School groups. A valuable aid for the teacher developing an experimental program in educational dramatics.

The Child Moses, by Lillian Leaman, a purely Biblical drama which has proved widely successful in the hands of church groups of some experience. Opportunity for elaborately developed Egyptian and Hebrew costumes. Small cast. For particulars about production address Religious Drama Department, Drama League of America, 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The City Beautiful, by H. Augustine Smith, Methodist Book Concern, New York. 25¢.

A historical pageant having for its central idea Jerusalem, the redeemed city. In six scenes showing the Holy City in David's time; on the day of the Triumphal Entry; under Mohammedan rule; and at the present time; and the forces of evil at work in the modern city and the Power of Christianity to overcome these evils; ending with a picture of the New Jerusalem where the "streets shall be full of happy children, and where Justice, Righteousness and Love shall prevail." About 100 characters. Time: 1 to 1½ hours.

Dramatization of Bible Stories for Children, by Elizabeth E. Miller, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, $1.

Contains sketchy dramatizations of Joseph, David and Goliath, Moses in the Bullrushes, Ruth, Queen Esther, Abraham and the Three Guests, Daniel in the Lion's Den, etc. These dramas, based upon actual work with a junior church organization may be adapted and elaborated for adult production by a director with even a little experience in Biblical dramatization, and the chapters devoted to the discussion of properties, etc. will greatly assist in any religious dramatic production.

Drama of Esther, Arranged by the Class in Religious Pedagogy at the National Training School, Y. W. C. A., 1917, Woman's Press, New York. 25¢.

Suitable for an all-girl cast. One interior setting. Directions.

Everyman, a Medieval Morality, origin unknown, Samuel French, New York. 50¢.

Also in *Everyman and Other Early Plays,* Houghton Mifflin & Co., New York, with interesting historical data. $1.

Simple settings, may be played against one curtain set. Medieval costumes. Tells the story of Everyman's worldy career with his Good Deeds alone left to befriend him at the last. Great artistic as well as religious possibilities. Produced scores of times in churches. 11 males, 5 females. Time: 1½ hours.

Everygirl, by Mary S. Edgar, Woman's Press, New York. 40¢.

An attractive allegory for girls. Everygirl, accompanied by her three companions, Health, Beauty and Dreams, starts out in quest of a life that is fully rounded out. May be adapted to introduce any number of extras. Plays a full evening.

The Gift, by Marie J. Foley, Samuel French, 28 West 38 Street, New York. 35¢.

A symbolic play in one act. The scene is the interior of a simple hut near Judea during the lifetime of our Lord. The story is of the triumphant faith of a little child. 2 men, 1 woman, 3 children. May be produced very simply without scenery. Runs about 30 minutes.

The Hour Glass, a morality, by William Butler Yates, Samuel French, New York. $1.60

An angel appears to the learned professor and tells him that he has but an hour of life in which he must find some one whose heart he has not turned from belief in God. As the last sands are running he finds faith in the heart of Teague, the Fool. 3 or more males, 1 fe-

male, and 2 or more children—an angel. Has been successfully played by an all female cast.

The House of the Heart, by Constance D'Arcy MacKay, Methodist Book Concern, New York, 30¢., or Henry Holt and Co., New York—with other plays for children—$1.20.

Wisdom teaches the child to choose carefully the guests of the heart. 1 scene. Simple setting. Instructions for producing. 12 children. Time about 30 minutes.

In His Steps, by C. M. Sheldon and F. M. Lane, is a dramatization of the famous story of the former, full imformation from the author, Topeka, Kansas. Text 25¢.

Drama of Isaiah, Eleanor Wood Whitman, Pilgrim Press, Boston, 75¢.

Develops episodes in the life of the Prophet from the days of Uzziah, the King when Jerusalem was prosperous and full of injustices to the days of King Hezekiah when the city was delivered from the Assyrians. May be produced simply or elaborately. 4 men, 5 women, 20 or more others and chorus. Permission from publishers. Costumes may be copied from Sargent's Frieze of the Prophets, or Tissot's life of Christ. Opportunity for rich pictorial effects.

Joseph and His Brethren, W. H. T. Gairdner, Macmillan, New York $1.

Old Testament Passion Play in 4 acts. Notes on costumes included. About 30 men, 3 women, 3 boys. Time: 2 hours.

Judith, by Arnold Bennett, George H. Doran, New York. $1.25.

"A simple direct play of considerable impressiveness as

drama and great force in its illustration of the religious significance of the story—free from artificialities." Suitable only for production by the group with some experience by which it may be simply worked out. Permission from the publishers.

Job, A Dramatization—"The Problem of Human Suffering," by James S. Stevens, Stratford Co., Boston, 75¢.

A beautiful interpretation, forcefully dramatized, divided into a prologue, the Curse, the Debate, the Interposition of Elihu, the Voice of the Lord, and the Epilogue. With scholarly notes upon the problem of the book, directions for staging and costuming and for supplementary music. Suggestions for shortening the discussions. Full production, about 1½ hours or longer.

The light of the World, a pageant, by H. Augustine Smith, Director of Fine Arts in Religion, Boston University. The Century Co., New York. $.15 Designed for the Christmas season or for Home and Foreign Missions. The first Presentation was in the Imperial Theater, Tokyo, October 8, 1920. The pageant is very effective but so simple in its costuming and staging that it can be produced with the simplest accessories.

The Light of the World, by Mrs. Annie Russell Marble, Worcester, Mass. Privately printed. Information from the author.

A church service designed to show significant scenes from the life of Jesus, and his influence. May be used as an Easter or a Christmas celebration. A Messenger reads the Scriptural story of the scenes, punctuated from time to time by choral responses. Action tableaux,

colored slides thrown upon a screen above pulpit or organ loft, solos and chorals illustrate the stories.

Passover Night, W. H. T. Gairdner, MacMillan and Co., New York. 35¢.

A Bible mystery play in 3 scenes. Two boys, a first-born of the Egyptians and an Israelite are playmates. One is slain. The other is passed over, saved by the blood of the paschal lamb. Characters, about 10 men, 3 women, 2 boys, 1 girl. Settings: an interior and an exterior. Time 1 hour.

Plays for Children, by Miss Rita Benton, Abingdon Press, New York, Shorter plays, and longer plays, each $1.50.

These little dramas are usually valuable in Sunday School or junior church work, having worked out by Miss Benton in her church work in Chicago. A number of them have been produced before large audiences at the request of the Drama League of America.

The Rock, Drama League Prize Play. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 35¢.

A study of Peter, appropriate for Holy Week or on other occasions. Illustration for settings and costumes from the original production by the Pilgrim Players of the First Congregational Church of Evanston, Ills.

Ruth, by Mary Blakehorn, Morehouse Pub. Co., Milwaukee, Wis. 15¢.

An elaborate and excellent mystery play often produced. 3 acts. 30 or more characters. Directions. 30 characters. Time: 2 hours.

The Sacrifice, by Lawrence I. MacQueen, Drama Magazine, March 1921. From the Drama League of

America, 59 E. Van Buren St., Chicago, 25¢.

Permission required. A story of Abraham and Isaac, dramatic, full of pathos. 4 characters. 2 scenes, Time: 45 minutes.

Star of the East, Anna J. Harnwell, Samuel French, New York. 35¢.

A brilliant and tense drama of the colorful story of Esther. Stage and costume designs by Dugald Walker. (A Drama League Prize Play)

The Servant in the House, by Charles Rann Kennedy, Harper Bros., $1.25.

A forceful play with a tremendous character in the person of the "Servant." Suitable only for the experienced group. Special arrangements necessary.

Song of Songs, by Hubert Osborne, Ms. copy only. Norman Lee Swartwout, Summit, N. J., Deposit of $10 required.

Dramatization of the Song of Solomon, following critical analysis of Ernest Renan. Produced at Art Theater, Carnegie Inst. of Technology where it created great interest among church people. Needs some simplification for church production.

The Terrible Meek, by Charles Rann Kennedy, Harper Bros., New York, $1.

An episode of the Crucifixion. Three voices on a dark stage. Special arrangement with author necessary.

The Traveling Man, in volume with six other plays, by Lady Gregory, under title "Seven Short Plays," Samuel French, New York. $2.

A modern miracle play of the King who came to a purse-proud peasant woman and was turned away, recog-

nized only by the child because he came humbly in beggar garb. May be produced in the church body. Not difficult to produce. 3 characters. About ½ hour. Royalty, $5.

World Fellowship, A service of Worship, by Mathilde J. Vossler and Jeanette Perkins, Woman's Press, New York. 35¢.

The consecration of the nations to Christianity. Simple to produce. Suitable for a Vesper service. Time about 30 minutes.

Three Hundred and Three Good Plays, Norman Lee Swartwout, Summit N. J., 50¢.

"A varied and carefully selected list to meet every requirement of Little Theater, Amateur Clubs, Schools, etc." will be useful to the church group in the development of entertainment programs and social play programs.

Two Hundred Plays Suitable for Amateurs, by Charles Stratton, may be ordered from him at 4477 Pershing St., St. Louis, 90¢.

Lists and briefly describes 100 1-act plays, and 100 full length plays suitable for amateur producing groups.

Fifty Contemporary One-Act Plays, edited by Shay and Loving, Frank Shay Bookshop, 4 Christopher St., New York. $5.25

Contains a number of well known little theater classics, listed upon receipt of postage.

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